ABUL A'LA MAUDUDI

PURDAH

AND

THE STATUS OF WOMAN IN ISLAM

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Nature of the Problem

THE first and foremost problem of man's community life on whose fair and rational solution depends his real advancement and well-being is the proper adjustment of the mutual relationships between the husband and the wife. For it is these relationships which provide the real basis for man's social life and on their strength and stability depends his future well-being.

Important as the solution of this problem is, its intricate nature has baffled philosophers and sages from the earliest times. In fact, one cannot be expected to offer its just and fair solution unless one has acquired a complete and comprehensive view of the whole human nature. But this is not an easy thing for man is a world in himself. His physical and mental make-up, his energies and capabilities, his desires and demands, his emotions and feelings, and his active and passive relationships with countless things outside him, these constitute a world in themselves. Man cannot be completely understood unless each nook and corner of this vast world is fully brought within a clear view. Conversely, the basic human problems cannot be solved unless man himself is first completely understood.

The enigma of human nature has defied solution by man since the earliest times and it still remains unsolved. The truth is that man has not yet been able to discover and explain all the facts and phenomena of this world. None of the sciences has so far attained that stage of perfection where it could claim to have encompassed all knowledge pertaining to its own particular sphere. Even those facts and phenomena that have been discovered and explained are so vast and complex in themselves that no man (or men) can have a complete view of all their facets simultaneously. If one tries to concentrate on one facet, the others recede into the background. Sometimes one is not able to give all one's attention to it and some-

times personal inclinations and whims distort its view. On account of these inherent weaknesses, man with all has ingenuities has failed to solve the problems of his own life. His own growing experience brings out flaws in his best thought out solutions. Real solution is indeed impossible without attaining a balanced view of the whole human nature, and a balanced view of it is impossible unless all the aspects of the known facts at least, are kept in view at one and the same time. But when the field to be viewed is too vast, and one's personal whims, likes and dislikes, too powerful to allow an unbiased picture, one cannot possibly attain a balanced view of things. Any solution under such conditions as these will naturally be based on one extreme or the other.

In order to illustrate this, let us go back to history. We come across various exaggerated notions based on the conflict of the two extremes. On the one hand, we find that the woman, who gives birth to man as mother and accompanies him in all the ups and downs of life as wife, has been reduced to the position of a maid, rather bondwoman. She is treated as other chattels, she is deprived of all rights of inheritance and ownership, she is regarded as an embodiment of sin and misfortune, and is refused all opportunities for developing and unfolding her personality. On the other hand, we find that the same woman is raised to prominence in a manner and with the result that a storm of immorality and licentiousness follows in her wake. She is made a plaything for carnal indulgence, she is actually reduced to the position of the Devil's agent, and with her rise to "prominence" starts the degeneration of mankind in general.

These two extremes are not merely theoretical but they exist in practice as well, and it is because of their evil consequences in the practical life that we pronounce them as immoral extremes. History testifies that when a community shakes off barbarism and advances towards civilization, its woman follow its men as maids and bond-women. Initially the community gains momentum from the store of energies that accrue from the wild life of the desert, but at a later stage of development it begins to realize that it cannot go any further by keeping half of its population in a state of bondage. Thus, when the community finds the pace of advancement being retarded, the feeling of necessity compels it to enable the neglected half also to

keep pace with the advanced half. But then it does not rest content with making amends only, it bestows undue freedom upon the fair sex with the result that the latter's excessive freedom deals a fatal blow at the family life which is the very basis of civilization. More than that, the free intermingling of the sexes brings in its wake a flood of obscenity, licentiousness and sexual perversion, which ruin the morals of the whole community. Along with this moral depravity starts the gradual weakening of the intellectual, physical and material energies of the community, which eventually leads it to total collapse and destruction.

Status of Woman In Different Ages

IT is not possible to recount here in detail all the instances of this from history, but a few illustrations are necessary.

Greece

Let us take the case of the Greek civilization which has been regarded as the most glorious of all the ancient civilizations. In its early stages, woman was looked down upon morally as well as socially, and she had no legal rights. According to the Greek mythology, an imaginary woman called Pandora was the source of all human ills and misfortunes, like the Eve of Jewish mythology. Just as the concocted story about Eve had deeply influenced the Jewish and Christian conception of the woman and adversely affected their law, social customs, morals as well as their general attitude towards life, so was the impact of Pandora fiction upon the Greek mind. The Greeks regarded woman as a sub-human creature whose rank in society was in every way inferior to that of man, for whom alone was reserved honour and a place of pride.

This notion and attitude with minor modifications remained in vogue during the early stages of the Greek cultural development. The enlightenment brought by civilization and knowledge did not affect woman's legal position, but it won for her a comparatively higher status in society. She became the queen of the Greek home, her duties being restricted to the four walls where she held a position of authority. Her chastity was a precious thing which was held in high esteem. Women of the Greek nobility observed Purdah, the female apartments in their houses were segregated from the male apartments, and their womenfolk neither sat in mixed gatherings nor were they prominently brought out in public. To be united with a man in wedlock was a privilege and mark of honour for a

woman, and her living the life of a prostitute was held in disgrace. At this time the Greek nation on the whole was vigorous and energetic and was rapidly climbing the ladder of advancement. Though the moral weaknesses were there, these were within certain limits. Men, unlike women, were exempt from the demands and requirements of chastity, purity of character and moral uprightness. Nor was it expected of them that they should lead a morally clean life. Prostitution was embedded in the Greek society and relations with corrupt women by men were not considered imporper.

Gradually the Greeks became overwhelmed by egotism and sexual perversion. With this change in the outlook, the corrupt female element gained such prominence that has no parallel in history. The house of the prostitute became the focus of attention of all classes of the Greek society, and attracted their philosophers, poets, historians, literary men and savants of art. She not only patronised literary functions but political affairs of great consequence also were decided under her influence. It may seem strange, the counsel of one who did not remain faithfully attached to one man even for two consecutive nights was eagerly sought and respected in matters on which depended life and death of the nation. Their aesthetic taste and worship of beauty aroused in the Greek people a thirst for sensual pleasures, and their indulgence, in sex began to find expression in the creation of nudes which spurred on their sexual feelings to the extent that they soon lost all sense whether sexual indulgence involved a moral turpitude. They became so degraded and depraved that even their philosophers and moral preceptors did not regard adultery and licentiousness as base and worthy of censure. The common man looked upon matrimony as an unnecessary restriction and considered fornication as perfectly lawful and right. So much so that eventually these became a part of their religion, and the worship of Aphrodite, the goddess of love and beauty, spread throughout Greece. And, according to their mythology, this goddess who was legal wife of one god, had developed illicit relations with three other gods as well as with a mortal. The result of this last illicit relationship was the birth of another god, Cupid, the god of love. The very fact that Aphrodite was an ideal goddess worthy of worship, was an index of their depra-

vity. After such a moral decline, no nation in the world has ever been seen to rise again. The cults of Bam-marg in India and Mazdak[1] in Iran emerged during similar periods of decline, and similar were the conditions in Babylon that helped prostitution gain religious holiness and sanctity. After its downfall, Babylon has never been heard of except in legends of the past. With the worship of the goddess of love in Greece, houses of prostitution became places of worship, prostitutes were considered like pious girls dedicated to the temples, and adultery was raised to the status of piety and invested with full religious sanctity.

Another aspect of the sexual lawlessness was the prevalence of the unnatural act among the Greeks, which was welcomed and patronized by religion and morality. Though no trace of this practice is found in the times of Homer and Hesiod, it spread with the advancement of civilization. When nudity and indulgence in the pleasures of the body came to be called by the civilized names of art and aesthetics, these aroused the erotic passions of the people to an extent that transgressing the natural bounds they began to seek satisfaction in the unnatural ways. Artists manifested this craving in statues. Moral preceptors described it as an index of the "bond of friendship" between two persons. Harmodius and Aristogiton[2] were the first two Greeks who won their countrymen's approbation and high regard on account of their unnatural connection with each other and were symbolized in statues, to be remembered for ever.

History bears evidence that after the passing away of its period of grandeur and pride, the Greek nation could never get a second opportunity of retracing its steps into glory.

Rome

In the case of the Romans who were the next to achieve glory and greatness after the Greeks, we witness a similar phenomenon of the rise and fall of empire. When the Romans emerged from

1. Leader of a movement who appeared in the reign of the Persian ruler Qubad (488—531 A.D.)—Tr.

2. Aristogiton (6th cent. B.C.) who together with Harmodius plotted the death of the tyrant Hippias and his brother.—Tr.

darkness on the bright horizon of history, their social traditions recognized man as the chief of the family unit, possessing full authority and power over the members of his family ; so much so that he could take the life of his wife.

As the Romans shook off savagery and advanced towards civilization, the family system remained unaffected, but its undue rigours practically softened down to moderation. When the Roman democracy was at its zenith, their women did not observe Purdah like the women of the Greek nobility, but the womenfolk and the youth were kept under an unrelenting family discipline. Chastity, especially of the female, was highly valued and considered as a criterion of the nobility of character. They had such a high moral standard that when a Roman Senator once kissed his wife in the presence of his daughter, it was considered derogatory to the national moral character and a vote of censure was passed against him on the floor of the house. There was no other legitimate and proper form of relationship between man and woman than through marriage. A woman was held worthy of respect only when she was the matron of a family. Though prostitution existed and men were free in a restricted way to have illicit relations with the prostitutes, the average Roman abhorred it and looked down upon men having such relations with contempt.

With the advancement on the road to civilization, the Roman concept about the position of the woman underwent a serious change. Rules and regulations governing marriage and divorce and the structure of the family system gradually suffered such a complete metamorphosis that conditions changed for the worse. Marriage was reduced to a civil contract which was held at the sweet will of the partners, which rendered the responsibilities of married life very light. Moreover, the woman was given full proprietary rights over inherited and other property and the law made her free of the authority of the father and the husband. Thus the Roman women not only became economically independent, but gradually a good portion of the national wealth also slipped into their control. They lent money to their husbands at high rates of interest with the result that husbands of wealthy wives virtually became their slaves. Divorce became easy and wedlock was ended on flimsy grounds.

Seneca (4 B.C.—65 A.D.), the famous Roman philosopher and statesman, has severely criticised his countrymen for the high incidence of divorce among them. He says:

> "Now divorce is not regarded as something shameful in Rome. Women calculate their age by the number of husbands they have taken."

Women in those days used to take several husbands one after the other. Martial (43 A.D.—104 A.D.) has mentioned a woman who had changed ten husbands. Juvenal (60 A.D.—130 A.D.) has written about a woman who changed eight husbands in five years. St. Jerome (340 A.D.—420 A.D.) makes mention of a wonderful woman whose last husband was the 23rd in sucession, and she was herself the 21st wife of her husband.

During this age, extra marital relations between man and woman began to be gradually disregarded with the result that even their moral preceptors looked upon adultery as a minor offence entailing no punishment. Cato (234—149 B.C.) who was appointed censor in Rome in 184 B.C. for taking cognizance of offences against public morality openly held juvenile delinquency as justifiable. Even Cicero (106—43 B.C.) pleaded for granting moral laxity to the youth. Epictetus (Ist cent. A.D.) who was known to be a morally strict and thorough-going Stoic advised his pupils:

> "Avoid the company of women before marriage, but refrain from castigating those who cannot resist the temptation".

When the checks on public morality became weak, the flood of sexual licentiousness, nudity and promiscuity burst upon Rome. Theatres became the scenes of moral perversion and nude performances; dwelling places were decorated with nude and immoral paintings; and prostitution became so widespread and popular that Caesar Tiberius (14 A.D.—37 A.D.) had to enforce a law prohibiting women of the Roman nobility from adopting prostitution. Flora became a popular Roman sport in which naked women competed in race contests. Males and females took bath together in public baths. Roman literature became replete with immoral and immodest themes with the result that no literary work devoid of such themes could become popular with the common people or the intelligentsia.

When the Romans became so overwhelmed by animal passions,

their glory completely faded away leaving not even a trace behind it.

Christian Europe

To cure the West of its moral ailments came Christianity. In the beginning it served the purpose well; it put an end to immoral customs, cleansed the various aspects of life of immodesty, made efforts to eradicate prostitution, retrieved corrupt women and dancing girls, and inculcated moral teachings on the people. But the concepts held by the Christian patriarchs of woman and conjugal relationship were not only opposed to human nature but unnatural to the extreme.

Their basic doctrine was that woman was the mother of sin and root cause of all evil. She was the primary cause of stimulating man towards sin and corruption and thus led him to Hell: all human ills and troubles emanated from her. The mere fact of her being a woman was enough to render her detestable. She should feel ashamed of her beauty and charms, for these served as means to Satanic temptations. She should, therefore, keep on atoning constantly for her inherent sins, because she was responsible for causing all human ills and misfortunes in the world.

Tertullian (A.D. 150) who was an early Father of the Christian Church has expounded the Christian doctrine about woman thus:

> "She opens the door to Satanic temptations: leads man to the forbidden tree, breaks the Law of God, and corrupts man—the image of God".

St. John Chrysostom (C. 345—407), one of the Greek Fathers of the Church, says:

> "She is an inevitable evil, an eternal mischief, an attractive calamity, a domestic risk, a charming and decorated misfortune".

Their second doctrine was that the sexual relation between man and woman was in itself an objectionable, dirty affair, even if it was established within legal marriage. This monastic conception of morality was already taking root in Europe under the influence of neo-Platonism. The Christian Church led it to its logical extreme. Consequently, celibacy and spinsterhood became the criterion of the nobility of character, and married life came to be regarded as a

necessary evil. Avoidance of marriage became a symbol of piety and holiness and a sign of sound moral character. To live a clean and pure religious life, therefore, one was either not to marry at all, or was to live apart from one's wife in complete abstinence of conjugal relations. Rules were passed in religious conferences barring the Church officials from meeting their wives in seclusion. They could, however, see each other in public in the presence of at least two other persons. The concept of the conjugal relationship as a dirty affair was inculcated on the Christian mind by various devices. For instance, it was enjoined that the man and wife who had shared bed during the night before a Church festival could not participate in it. They were too polluted to be allowed to associate themselves with a religious function. This monastic conception affected adversely the relations of love and blood, even those between mother and son, because all relations resulting from the bond of marriage were held as vicious and sinful.

These two doctrines not only caused the downfall of the woman from moral as well as social points of view, but they also undermined the traditions underlying the community life to the extent that, on the one hand, married life became a headache both for men and women ; and, on the other, the social status of the woman was in every way degraded. Following are the main features of the legal injunctions that were enforced in the West under the influence of the Christian Church :

1. The woman was crushed economically and made to depend wholly on man permanently: she was given limited rights of inheritance, and even more limited of acquiring and holding property; she had no control over her own earnings, as these were all seized by the husband with full proprietary rights.

2. Divorce and Khul'a[1] were totally prohibited. The man and wife were compelled to remain together, both by religion and law, though they might be fed up with each other. The maximum that could be done in extreme circumstances was to cause separation between the spouses, and that was all. In such a case, neither the

1. That is, the right of divorce effected by the wife in lieu of a compensation paid by her to the husband out of her own property.—Tr.

man nor the woman was entitled to remarry. Obviously, this measure was even worse, for after separation they were left with no other choice than to become monks and nuns or resort to a life of sin.

3. It was considered vicious, rather sinful, for the spouses to remarry after the death of their life partners. According to the Christian scholars, remarrying was nothing but a means of satisfying animal passions and lusts of the flesh. They called it "civilized adultery". Remarrying by the priests was particularly looked upon as a crime under the Church law. Law of the land had also prohibited it in certain places, and where it was allowed by law, public opinion which was deeply coloured by the religious prejudices, did not recognize it as lawful.

Modern Europe

When in the 18th century the European philosophers and writers raised their voice in favour of the individual's rights against the society and began to blow the trumpet of liberty they in fact were attacking the anti-social system of morality and life that had been brought in by the unholy alliance of the Christian moral doctrines and the prevalent feudal system. This had suppressed and crushed the human urges and blocked the way of progress for a long time. The destruction of this anti-social system at the hands of the European architects of renaissance paved the way for the French Revolution, after which the Western civilization steadily grew on the lines leading to and culminating in the modern age of progress and enlightenment.

In the beginning of the modern age, efforts made to raise the womenfolk from virtual slavery brought about wholesome effects in the community life. Rigorous regulations relating to marriage and divorce were moderated. Economic rights of women of which they had been completely deprived were almost restored. Moral doctrines which held women low and contemptible were reformed. Social concepts which had reduced them to virtual slavery were modified. Portals of higher education and training were opened to them also along with men. These reforms gradually helped to bring out their hidden capabilities suppressed by wrong social laws and moral concepts. They beautified the houses, lent charm and sweetness to social life and undertook welfare works. Under their

good influence and care, public health was improved, new generations brought up better, patients nursed and home science was rapidly developed. These were the initial fruits of the awakening brought about in the lives of women by the new civilization. But there is another side of the picture. The doctrines that gave birth to this awakening were inclined towards an extreme from the very beginning. This inclination rapidly increased during the 19th century, until with the advent of the 20th century the pendulum of social life in the West had already swung to the opposite extreme.

Three Doctrines of Western Society

The doctrines underlying the Western society may be divided under three heads :

1. Equality between the male and the female ;
2. Economic independence of woman ; and
3. Free intermingling of the sexes.

The result of building and developing social life on these bases was inevitable. It led Europe to the following consequences :

1. Equality between the sexes was taken to mean that the man and the woman were not only equal in moral status and human rights, but that the woman was also free to undertake the same sort of jobs as were done by the man, and that moral restrictions on her needed to be slackened as they were for him. This wrong concept of equality led women astray and made them unmindful of their natural functions on the performance of which depends the very existence of human race and civilization. She became wholly absorbed in her economic, political and social pursuits. He electioneering campaigns, service in offices and factories, competition with men for commercial and industrial vocations, sports and physical exercises, social entertainments, and her absorption in the club, stage and musical concerts, besides several other engagements, so overwhelmed her that she became utterly indifferent to the responsibilities of married life. The bringing up of children and the organization and care of the home ceased to be her special care. Besides, she developed an abhorrence for her natural duties, affecting ultimately the family system which is the basis of civilization. The result is that home life on which depends man's efficiency is fast

disappearing in the West. The bond of marriage which is the practical form of man and woman's co-operation in the service and development of civilization is rapidly weakening. The increase in population is being checked by birth control, abortion and destruction of the offspring. The wrong concept of moral equality has come to establish immoral equality between the sexes. Those vicious and sinful acts which were once held shameful even for men, now do not bring any shame or disgrace on women.

2. The economic independence of woman has made her independent of man and the great time-honoured principle, "Man for the field and woman for the hearth", has been flung to the winds. The new principle is that both man and woman should earn and leave the running and maintenance of the home to the hotel. After such a radical change, man and woman have been left with no common interest that could bind them together except the satisfaction of their sexual desires. Obviously, the mere satisfaction of the sexual desires is not a thing that can tie the male and the female together for a lifelong companionship and compel them to live a family life with common interests. Why should a woman who wins her own bread, supports herself economically and does not depend on anyone for security and maintenance, remain faithfully attached to one man only for the sake of satisfying her sexual desires ? Why should she be prepared to subject herself to so many moral and legal curbs to shoulder the responsibilities of family life ? Especially, when the concept of moral equality has cleared her way of all obstacles for satisfying sexual desires freely, why should she forsake the easy, pleasure-giving and alluring way of satisfying them and choose the antiquated way that is not only laden with responsibilities but demands sacrifices also ? With the banishment of religion from life, the fear of committing sin was automatically destroyed. The fear of society is no more there, because the society now does not regard a prostitute with disfavour but welcomes her. Lastly, there was the danger of illegitimate children; this has been guarded against by the contraceptive devices. If these devices fail, abortion may be resorted to. If abortion cannot be procured, the baby may be quietly disposed of for ever. If, however, the motherly instinct (which is not yet dead) saves the child, no compunction is felt for

being an unmarried mother. "Spinster mother" and "illegitimate child" have so freely and favourably been talked about that no society can now dare regard them with disfavour, unless of course, it is prepared to brave the charges of obscurantism and backwardness.

This state of affairs has shaken the very foundations of social life in the West. Hundreds of thousands of young women in every Western country like to live unmarried lives, which they are bound to pass in immoral, promiscuous and sinful ways. A still greater number of them marry under the temporary impulse of physical love, but since there does not exist any relation of inter-dependence between the man and the woman that may permanently bind them together except the sexual relation, the bond of marriage has also lost most of its strength and stability. The man and the woman who have grown almost wholly independent of each other, do not generally find themselves inclined to any kind of mutual concession or compromise. Transient and short-lived as emotional-sexual love is, a marriage based on it cannot stand the strain of even the most ordinary difference of opinion, not to speak of real indifference that more often than not becomes the cause of separation. It is for this reason that most marriages end in divorce or estrangement. Contraceptive devices, resort to abortion, destruction of the offspring, falling of the birthrate and the high incidence of illegitimate births, all point to the same root cause. Immoral and promiscuous living and the spread of venereal diseases can also be traced back to the same sad state of affairs.

3. The free intermingling of the sexes has brought in its wake an ever-growing tendency towards showing off, nudeness and sex perversion. Sexual attraction which naturally exists between the sexes as a strong instinctive urge becomes all too powerful, even rebellious, to transgress all limits with every impetus it receives from the free intermingling of the men and women. This freedom of mixing together naturally gives rise to an urge to appear as attractive to the opposite sex as possible. In the absence of any moral restraint this urge is satisfied with increasing keenness and both the sexes begin to show off and display their physical charms without

any consideration for decency. This tendency sometimes touches nudeness. Such is the condition of the Western civilization today. To develop a magnetic attraction for man has become a mania with the woman there. When, however, she cannot satisfy this mania in spite of bright and dazzling dress, powders and lip-sticks, and a thousand other ways of beautifying herself, the poor disgusted soul jumps out of her clothes. Men, on the other hand, are growing more and more voracious in their sexual appetite, because the fire of base emotions burning within them flares up instead of being quenched with ever-increasing intensity with every new gesture of display from women. These poor people in fact suffer from an insatiable thirst which tends to become even more insatiable with every drop of water passing down their throats. To satisfy this extraordinary sexual urge they are ever busy inventing and designing new ways. The nude pictures, sexual literature, love romances, nude ballroom dancing, sex-inciting films, all are means of itensifying the same fire which the wrong social system has kindled in every heart. To save their faces, they call it "art".

This disease is eating fast into the very vitals of the Western nations. No nation in the past has survived it. It destroys all the mental and physical capabilities of man that God has endowed him with for his well-being and prosperity. Obviously, the people who are surrounded by sex stimulants on all sides, who have to face a new temptation and a new spur every moment, who are submerged in an emotionally wrought-up environment, and who perpetually remain in a feverish condition on account of nude pictures, cheap literature, exciting songs, emotionally erotic dances, romantic films, highly disturbing scenes of obscenity and ever-present changes of encountering members of the opposite sex, cannot possibly find that peace of mind and tranquillity of heart that is so essential for constructive and creative work. More than that, such an environment that prevails in the Western world today is not at all conducive to that calm and peaceful atmosphere which is essential for the full development of the mental and moral qualities of the coming generations. As soon as the young people attain maturity, animal passions lay complete hold of them with the result that the moral growth of their personalities is almost wholly impeded.

Miserable Failure of Human Intellect

This is the historical background of the rise and fall of civilizations over a period of three thousand years or so. It is related to a vast area that has been the cradle of two great civilizations of the past, and which again boasts of the most prominent civilization in the world of today. Similar is the story of Egypt, Babylon, Iran and other countries. The sub-continent has also been suffering from one excess or the other for centuries. Here, on the one hand the woman is made to worship the man who becomes her master and lord : she has to subserve her father as a maid in childhood, become a chattel of the husband in youth and submit humbly to her children in widowhood. She is required to sacrifice herself over the burning bier of her husband; she is deprived of her right to inherit and acquire property; she is subjected to extreme laws in marriage under which she is made over to a man without her consent; and she is compelled to live willy-nilly under the thumb of that husband till her death. She is regarded as an embodiment of sin and moral and spiritual depravity as in Judaism and Christianity, and she is not supposed to have an independent personality. On the other hand, when she is regarded with love, she is made a plaything for animal passion, she overrides the man, ruins herself and leads the whole community to decay and disintegration. Worship of the male and female organs, naked and genitally united statues in temples, religious prostitutes, frivolous scenes at the festival of Holi, all are manifestations of the same malady. These are indeed the impious remnants of the movement started by Bam-marg, which spread like plague in India at the zenith of her civilization. Just as it brought ruin to Iran, Babylon, Greece and Rome, so it led the entire Hindu nation to the lowest ebb of its decline.

If we study these instances carefully, we shall see how difficult it is for man to attain a balanced and just view with regard to woman, grasp it fully and practise it in life. A balanced view can only be the one which, on the one hand, allows the woman an opportunity for developing her personality and capabilities fully, and enables her to play her due role in the cultivation of human civilization with full-grown capacities and skills, and, on the other, prevents her from becoming a means of moral decay and disintegration. Her partner-

ship with man should be so adjusted that co-operation of one with the other produces wholesome results in the building up of community life. Man has been trying hard for centuries to attain this balanced and just view but has not yet succeeded. Sometimes he swings to one extreme and renders one half of humanity useless; sometimes he swings to the other extreme and the whole of humanity becomes paralysed.

This balanced and just view is not imaginary, it exists. But man's faculty of judgement has become so blunted by continuously shifting his position between the two extremes for centuries that now he does not even recognize it. Indeed he spurns it, speaks disparagingly of it, and tries to put to shame those who happen to possess it. He may be likened to a child who is born in a coal mine and bred and brought up there. Obviously, he will take the dark atmosphere of his place of birth for the real and natural world. But when he is brought out of it and confronts the bright, pure and clean world of nature, he will naturally feel ill at ease in the beginning. But man after all is man. He cannot possibly keep his eyes closed to reality and refuse to discern between a coal-ceiling and the star-studded sky. His lungs cannot refuse to distinguish between the pure air and the impure dust for long.

CHAPTER 3

Purdah and the Muslims of Today

THE Muslim was the one who could save the world from the evil of extremes, because he alone possesses the correct solution of all the problems of man's community life. But the tragedy of man's misfortune has been that the one possessing the beacon of Light has himself gone night-blind. Not to speak of guiding others to the Right Path, he himself has got lost and is running after the other blind people in search of light and truth.

The word "Purdah" is used as a title for the set of injunctions which constitute the most important part of the Islamic system of community life. If these injunctions are viewed in their right perspective against the structure of this system, every person who has not wholly lost his powers of discernment will readily admit this to be the only balanced and just view in regard to man's social life. Then if this system is shown to work practically in its true spirit, the whole woe-stricken world will rush towards this fountain-head of peace and security and seek its help in curing its social maladies. But the question is : Who will undertake such a demonstration? The one who could do this has himself been taken ill for a long time. Therefore, before proceeding further let us have a look at him and try to diagnose his ailment.

Historical Background

It was the end of the 18th and beginning of the 19th century when the Western nations' hunger for territorial expansion assumed the proportions of a deluge on the horizons of the Muslim countries and before the people could fully wake up to the impending disaster, it took the whole world of Islam, from the east to the west, by storm. Consequently, by the middle of the 19th century most of the Muslim nations had been subdued by Europe. Even those nations which apparently held their own had in fact been subdued mentally and

spiritually. When this subjugation was complete, the Muslims began to cast off slumber. The national pride that they had developed through centuries of rule and conquest was shattered and like a drunken one who is brought to senses by continuous strokes of a powerful enemy, they began to examine the causes of their humiliation and defeat and those of European domination. Though the state of intoxication was over, they had not yet fully regained their senses and balance. On the one hand, their feeling of extreme humiliation was impelling them for the change. On the other, their love of ease and comfort which they had developed during the past centuries forced them to choose the path of the least resistance to bring about this change. Then their intellectual powers which they had not cared to exercise for decades had also grown rusty. Besides, they soon developed a slavish mentality and fear which naturally afflict a nation that has been politically routed. All these various factors combined to mislead the Muslims into grave pitfalls. Most of them were indeed at a loss to understand the real causes of their downfall *vis-a-vis* Europe's rise to power. But even those who understood these causes lacked the necessary courage and muscle as well as the spirit to fight for their freedom. On top of that mental subjugation afflicted both the classes. Being degenerate the way they chose to climb the ladder of progress was the one offering the least resistance. They decided to imitate the ways and manners of the Western civilization in their lives and develop the quality of a mirror that faithfully reflects a garden in full bloom but in reality is without it.

Mental Slavery

It was during this state of crisis that the Western dress, Western ways of living, Western etiquette, even Western manners of moving about, were imitated and all-out efforts made to mould the Muslim society after the Western patterns. Heresy, atheism and materialism were accepted as a fashion. Any idea, good or bad, that came from the West was accepted without question and favoured publicly to show broad-mindedness. Drinking, gambling, lottery system, horse-racing, theatre, music, dancing and other evils of the Western civilization were adopted most eagerly. All the Western theories

and practices pertaining to culture, morality, social life, economics, politics, law, even religious beliefs and worships, were accepted blindly without ascertaining their validity, like a Divine Revelation, which has to be believed and obeyed. Even the events of Islamic History, injunctions of the Islamic *Shari'ah*, and the Commandments of the *Qur'an* and *Hadith*, that were objected to in the spirit of fault-finding by the enemies of Islam, began to shame the Muslims into apologizing. The Europeans objected to *Jihad* and Muslims readily expressed their indignation against it; they found fault with slavery[1] and the Muslims averred that it was absolutely unlawful in Islam; they objected to polygamy and the Muslims at once closed their eyes to a clear verse of the *Qur'an*; they said that man and woman should enjoy perfect equality between them, the Muslims said that that was their faith ; they objected to the Islamic laws governing marriage and divorce, the Muslims were bent on mending and modifying them; they said that Islam disfavoured art, the Muslims stated that Islam had always been patronizing music and dancing, painting and sculpture; so on and so forth.

How the Problem Arose

At this most shameful period of the Muslim history, Purdah system also came under fire. If the question had been: How much freedom had woman been allowed in Islam?—it was not difficult to tackle. The most one could differ in the matter was whether the hands and the face were to be covered or left uncovered; and this was in no way a basic difference. The question, however, was a different one. This question arose among the Muslims because Europe regarded "harem", Purdah and veil with disfavour. The European writers portrayed these in loathsome and ugly colours

1. As regards slavery, it should be noted well that Islam has strictly prohibited the sale and purchase of free human beings. It has, however, permitted this in the case of prisoners of war as a necessary evil. The Muslims may either set them free as a favour, or for ransom or for exchange of Muslim prisoners of war, or keep them as slaves in their houses. But even in that case, slavery has been made as humane as possible. The Muslims have been enjoined to treat them with the utmost kindness and educate them to become useful members of society. The slaves are also allowed to win their freedom by fulfilling the conditions that may be laid down by their masters.—Tr.

and, while enumerating the demerits of Islam, they mentioned the "confinement" of women prominently. As usual the Muslims felt ashamed, and, they reacted and behaved in the matter of Purdah exactly as they had done in matters of *Jihad*, slavery, polygamy, etc. They turned over the pages of the *Qur'an*, Collections of *Hadith* and religious opinions and verdicts of the early doctors merely with a view to collecting some material with which they could wash off the "ugly blot" of shame. They found that certain scholars had allowed uncovering of the hands and the face, and also that a woman could go out as and when required under necessity. Again they found that a woman was permitted to go to the battlefield to look after the wounded and thirsty soldiers. She could also visit mosques for offering prayers and for learning or imparting knowledge. With this material in hand, they came out with the claim that Islam had granted full liberty to woman. Purdah was a custom of ignorance which had been adopted by the narrow-minded Muslims long after the glorious period of Islam. They also averred that the *Qur'an* and *Hadith* were devoid of the Purdah injunctions; they only inculcated moral teachings of modesty and chastity; and Islam did not recognize any discipline restricting the movements of women.

The Real Motives

One common weakness with man is that when he adopts an attitude in life, his approach in the beginning is generally emotional and irrational. Later, he tries to prove it to be rational by resort to argument and reason. The same was the approach adopted by the Muslims with regard to the law of Purdah. It did not arise under the feeling of a rational or religious need, it arose as a result of being overwhelmed by the attractive culture of a dominant power and its vehement propaganda against Islamic culture.

When our so-called reformers saw with dazed eyes the European ladies in their full make-up moving freely and participating actively in social life, they could not help longing to see their own womenfolk also tread the same path of freedom and progress. They were also influenced by the modern concepts of the emancipation and education of women and the propaganda of the equality of the sexes that was incessantly being carried out by powerful logic and the printing

machine. The literature thus produced was so attractive and powerful that it adversely affected their powers of thinking and discrimination. It forced them to believe in these concepts without question, and propagate them by all possible means. They were convinced that enforcing these concepts in the practical life was absolutely essential for one who liked to be called "enlightened and broad-minded" as against "rigid and old-fashioned". Therefore, when modestly dressed veiled women were dubbed "moving tents and shrouded funerals", these so-called reformers felt shamed into disgrace. Obviously, they could not put up with this disgrace and humiliation for a long time. They were, therefore, impelled to wash off this shameful blot from the face of their social life as soon as possible.

Such were the feelings and trends that gave birth to the movement for the emancipation of women among the Muslims towards the end of the 19th century. Some people who did not know why they felt inclined towards this movement had these very sentiments lurking in their subconscious. They were in fact labouring under self-deception. Others who were fully conscious of their inclinations could not dare express them openly. They did not deceive themselves, they tried to deceive others. Both the classes, however, made it a point to conceal the real motives behind their movement and tried to project it as a rational, instead of an emotional, movement. The various pretexts that were brought in support of it were all imported directly from Europe. Among these were women's health considerations, growth of their intellectual capabilities and practical skills, protection of their natural birth rights, safeguarding their economic independence, their deliverance from man's bondage and apathy and, above all, the necessity of their progress as on it alone depended the cultural advancement of the whole community. These pretexts were put forth with a view to hoodwinking the common Muslims and keeping them in the dark about the real motives of guiding and directing the womenfolk to follow in the footsteps of the Western women and moulding them into the social patterns prevalent in the West.

A Great Hoax

The greatest hoax that has been played in this connection is

that efforts were made to prove from the *Qur'an* and *Hadith* that this movement was in perfect conformity with Islam. The fact, however, is that Islam and the Western civilization are poles apart in their objectives as well as in their principles of social organization. Islam, as we shall see later, aims at canalizing man's sex energy by moral discipline so as to render it conducive to the building up of a clean and pious culture instead of wasting it in dissipation and erotic passions. In contrast to this, the Western civilization aims at speeding up material progress by encouraging equal participation of man and woman in the affairs and responsibilities of life, and at the same time sublimating sex energy in arts and other channels with a view to getting relief from the bitter hardships of the life-struggle. This difference of objectives necessarily leads to a fundamental difference in approach and methods of social organization as adopted by Islam and the Western civilization. Thus the object of Islam is to establish a social order that segregates the spheres of activity of the male and the female, discourages and controls the free intermingling of the sexes, and curbs all such factors as are likely to upset and jeopardize the social discipline. On the contrary, the object before the Western civilization requires, and naturally so, that both the sexes should be drawn into the same field of life and activity, that all such hindrances and impediments should be removed as are likely to obstruct their free and promiscuous intermingling, and that they should be afforded unlimited opportunities to enjoy each other's beauty and charm of physical perfections.

Now, any intelligent person can see how sadly mistaken are those people who, on the one hand, feel inclined to follow the Western civilization and, on the other, cite Islamic principles of social life in support of their trends. According to the Social System of Islam, a woman at the most can uncover her hands and face, if necessary, and can go out of her house for genuine needs. But these people take this last limit as their starting point. They set out from the point where Islam comes to halt, and transgress all limits of decency and modesty without hesitation. Not to speak of the hands and face, beautifully parted hair on the head, bare arms to the shoulders, and semi-covered breasts are also displayed. Rest of the bodily charms are so covered in gauzy attires as to satisfy

the hungry sexual gaze of men. More than that, tastefully dressed wives, sisters and daughters in full make-up, are brought face to face with friends, not to speak of near relations, and are encouraged to mix freely and have good time with them in a manner and to an extent unimaginable for a Muslim lady even in company of her real brother. Permission to leave the house that was conditional on genuine need and observance of perfect modesty and full covering of the body is being abused for license to roam aimlessly on the road-side, stroll in the parks, visit hotels and go to pictures, in glamorous saris and attractive blouses that hardly cover their nakedness. The limited and conditional freedom that women had been allowed by Islam in matters other than home science is being used as argument to encourage the Muslim women to abandon home life and its responsibilities like the European women and make their lives miserable by running after political, economic, social and other activities shoulder to shoulder with men.

Things in the sub-continent have so far reached this state, but the condition of the people of Egypt, Turkey and Iran, who are politically free but mentally servile is even worse. To vie with European women, the "Muslim" women of these countries have started wearing exactly the same sort of dress as is worn in the West. Turkish ladies have taken to beach bathing in one-piece bathing-suits, the dress which hardly covers one-fourth of the body and that also in a manner as to reveal all the outlines of the female figure.

One wonders how people can seek justification for such a shameless way of life from the *Qur'an* and *Hadith*. If some people feel like adopting it, they should boldly do so and declare their desertion of Islam and its law unequivocally. This would indeed be the height of hypocrisy and dishonesty on their part if they openly adopted in the name of the Qur'an that system and way of life whose basic principles, objectives and practices have been condemned, one and all, as unlawful by the Qur'an. By citing the Qur'an at the outest they perhaps want to deceive the world into believing that they are following the Qur'an in their entire lives.

The Object Before Us

Such being the condition of the "Muslim" of today, our object

in this book is two-fold :

First, we propose to present before the people at large, Muslim or non-Muslim, the entire Social System of Islam and explain to them the necessity and importance of the Purdah injunctions in it.

Second, we want to present before the "modern" Muslims the injunctions of the *Qur'an* and *Hadith* as against the doctrines and results of the Western way of life with a view to helping them to give up their hypocritical attitude towards life. This will enable them to choose one of the two alternatives with a clear heart : Either they will have to live in accordance with the Islamic injunctions if they want to remain Muslims, or they will have to discard Islam if they are prepared to face those disgraceful results towards which the Western way of life will inevitably lead them.

CHAPTER 4

Western Concepts of Morality

ARGUMENTS that are put forward against Purdah are not merely negative in nature but have a positive and affirmative basis also. People who advance these arguments do not merely regard the woman's remaining within the four walls and her going out in veil as an unnecessary restriction, and want to remove it; they have in their mind a totally different way of life for her. They indeed possess an altogether different concept of the relationships between the male and female. They want the female to follow one particular way and not the other. Thus, their main objection against Purdah is that if the woman remains confined to the house and veiled, she cannot follow that particular way, nor can she do "that" which is expected of her.

Let us now find out what is that "something": what are the concepts and principles underlying it, whether it is right and reasonable in itself and what are its consequences in practical life. Obviously, if these concepts and principles are taken for granted, then Purdah and the social system of which it is a constituent part are automatically proved to have been wrongly conceived. But the question is: Why should these concepts and principles be accepted without being subjected to pragmatic tests of reason and experience? Is the mere fact of their being modern and prevalent in the world of today enough to make one accept and adopt them uncritically?

18th Century Concept of Liberty

As I have pointed out above, the philosophers, scientists and literary men who raised their voice for reform in the 18th century had in fact to grapple with a social system which was overflowing with undue restrictions, which was highly inflexible and which was replete with senseless customs, rigid regulations and unreasonable,

unnatural diversities. Centuries of decline and decay had rendered this system the stumbling-block in the way of progress. On the one hand, the new awakening and enlightenment was impelling the middle class (the bourgeoisie) to emerge on top by struggling hard. On the other, people of the upper class and the churchmen were sitting tight and tightening upon them the knots of custom and tradition. Administration of the churches and defence forces, management of the courts of justice and royal palaces, maintenance of the agricultural lands and financial and business centres, and the running of the other spheres of social life was such that a few privileged classes were taking full advantage of already established rights and appropriating the fruits of the labours and capabilities of the emergent middle class. Every effort that aimed at reforming the conditions was foiled by the selfish and hideous motives of the people in authority. This caused disgust among the people who longed for the change and better times and filled them gradually with a blind urge for revolution. Consequently, the whole social system with each of its constituent parts was revolted against, eventually giving rise to an extremist concept of personal freedom which aimed at bestowing complete liberty and absolute freedom on the individual as against society. It was pleaded that the individual ought to be privileged with the right to do anything that he liked and have the freedom to refrain from anything that he disliked. Society had no right to restrict or curb his personal freedom. The government was there mainly to see that the individual's freedom of choice and action was safeguarded, and the social institutions were meant to help the individual to attain his goals and objectives.

This exaggerated notion of liberty which was in fact the result of retaliation against the prevalent inhuman social order contained in it germs of a greater iniquity. People who had initially propagated it were themselves not fully aware of its logical possibilities. Had they foreseen the results in which the unrestricted freedom and unbridled liberty of the individual was going to culminate, they would perhaps have shuddered with disgust. They in fact had aimed to remove undue severities and unreasonable restrictions imposed on contemporary society. But eventually the new ideas took root in the Western mind and began to grow unhampered.

19th Century Changes

The French Revolution came in the wake of this concept of freedom.[1] Its repercussions were far-reaching. It shattered to pieces most of the moral concepts and cultural and religious traditions. When the revolutionaries saw that the destruction of the old concepts and traditions led to progress, they concluded that each one of the already established concepts and ways of life was a stumbling-block which must be removed to make any headway towards progress. Therefore, as soon as they had destroyed wrong principles of Christian ethics they turned their attention towards the basic concepts of human ethics : they questioned chastity; they objected to the restrictions of piety on the youth; and they did not see any harm in having love and sex relations outside marriage. After marriage, they argued, one could not be denied the right to love for one still possessed a heart. Such were the doubts and objections hat were raised in the post-revolution society on all sides, especially by the Romantic School of writers. George Sand (1804—1876) was their leader in the beginning of the 19th century. She herself violated all those moral principles of conduct on which is based human nobility of character, especially of the female. Being the legal wife of one husband, she established illicit relations freely with others. At last she separated from her husband and changed several "friends" successively, but did not stay with anyone for more than two years. In her biography at least six men have been mentioned, with whom she had open and regular

1. This concept of the libery of the individual gave birth to the modern capitalistic order, democratic system of culture, and moral licentiousness. During the next one a half century it meted out such inhuman treatment to mankind in Europe and America that human nature felt constrained to revolt against it. By allowing the individual a free license for selfish motives against the general well-being of society, it helped ruin collective welfare of the community and disintegrate social life. Socialism and Fascism are its first fruit. These so-called reconstructive development contained germs of disintegration from the very beginning. These in fact have sought to cure one extreme by the other extreme. The 18th century concept of freedom erred by sacrificing the community to the individual. The 20th century has erred in the opposite extreme by sacrificing the individual to the community. For the salvation of mankind a balanced and just concept is as remote today as it was in the 18th century.

illicit relations.

Alfred de Musset (1810—1857), French poet of the Romantic School, was also one of her lovers. He was so much disgusted with her faithlessness that he willed that George Sand would not attend his funeral. This was then the personal character of the woman who deeply influenced the new French generation by her charming and romantic works for as long as thirty years. In her novel, *Lelia*, the heroine writes to Stenio :[1]

> "The longer I live the more I recognise that the notions adopted by our young people, with regard to the exclusiveness of the love's ardour, the absolute possession which it demands, and the eternal rights which it claims, are false, or at least fatal. All opinions should be allowed, and I would grant that of conjugal fidelity to exceptional souls. The majority have other needs and other capabilities; they need reciprocal freedom, mutual tolerance, exclusion of all jealous egoism . . . . All loves are true, whether impetuous or peaceful, sensual or ascetic, lasting or transient : whether they lead men to suicide or to pleasure." (Paul Bureau, p. 106).

In another of her novels entitled *Jacques* she presents the character of an ideal husband. The wife of the hero (Jacques) establishes illicit relations with another man, but the husband is too large-hearted to censure and hate her. Accounting for this liberal attitude, he says that he has no right to trample under foot a rose which desires to spread its sweet smell to others, besides him. At another place she expresses through Jacques the following ideas:

> "I have not changed my opinion, I have not made peace with society, and marriage is always according to my judgement one of the most barbarous institutions ever imagined. I have no doubt that it will be abolished, if the human race makes any progress towards justice and reason ; a bond more human and not less sacred, will replace it, and will secure the existence of offspring who will be born of a man and a woman, without ever fettering the liberty of either. But men are too gross and

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1. These extracts have been taken from Paul Bureau's, *Towards Moral Bankruptcy*, published from London by Constable and Co, in 1925.

women too cowardly to demand a nobler law than that which rules them : heavy chains must bind beings who lack conscience and virtue". (Paul Bureau, pp. 107-108).

Such were the ideas propounded in and about 1833. George Sand did not go further. She could not dare take these ideas to their logical conclusions. In spite of her liberal-mindedness and 'enlightenment', she had not been able to shake off wholly the dirt of traditional morality. Thirty-five years later, the thesis was taken up again by another School of dramatists, literary men and moral philosophers whose chiefs were Alexandre Dumas (1802—1870) and Alfred Naquet. These writers vehemently propagated the ideas that freedom and satisfaction of the pleasures of the body were in themselves the birth-right of every individual. To curb this right with moral and social restrictions was cruel on the part of society. The foregoing writers had demanded freedom of action for the individual in love affairs only. The new writers felt this emotional basis for freedom to be too weak. Therefore they tried to establish the demand for individual liberty, moral lawlessness, and unbridled freedom on the more sound basis of philosophic reasoning. Thereby they wanted to encourage young men and women to do whatever they pleased with full satisfaction and approval of the conscience. Moreover, they wanted to educate the society not to mind the lustful behaviour of the youth but to regard it as morally right and laudable.

Towards the end of the 19th century, Paul Adam (1862—1920), Henri Bataille (1872—1922), Pierre Louys (1870—1925) and many other writers spent all their art and skill on imbuing the youth with blind courage and dash so as to remove completely all shadows of hesitation and inhibition caused in the minds by the out-moded moral ideals. Paul Adam in his book, *Le Morale de L'amour*, has censured the youth for committing the folly of making their sweet-hearts believe that they are passionately in love with them and cannot live without them. He writes :

"To walk together in the moonlight by the woodland path, repeating to each other banal and unchanging trifles, to swear emphatic and empty lies, to promise each other a life less capable of separation than they believe other people's to be, to exchange

> empty promises and lyric hypocrisies, ... ; this is what is destroying, alas ! the best of our French youth.
>
> "All this to conceal, under empty verbiage, the healthy longing for simple bodily union at the will of a natural and innocent appetite.
>
> "It is a great evil among the Latin races that lovers refuse to admit plainly and candidly their relish for voluptuousness, and for the joyous companionship of the sexes".
>
> (Paul Bureau, p. 111).

He advises the youth :

> "Then be refined and sensuous savants, not building a temple to the servants of your pleasures nor lazily falling asleep at their feet, but choosing a new guest for each moment of pleasure".
>
> (Paul Bureau, p. 112).

Pierre Louys went still further. He emphasized the ideas that moral restrictions in fact hindered the proper growth of man's intellectual, scientific and spiritual development. In his *Aphrodite*, he has tried to establish the hypothesis that civilization was at its zenith in Babylon, Alexandria, Athens, Rome, Venice and other centres at the time when sensuality, moral lawlessness and sexual licentiousness flourished unchecked. "As the beauty of the soul illuminates all the face, so corporal virility alone fertilizes the brain". But as soon as moral and legal restrictions were imposed on human urges, human soul was also doomed to fetters.

Pierre Louys was a prominent literary figure of his time. He set a new style of writing and established an independent school in literature. In his wake appeared a whole constellation of novelists, dramatists and writers on morality, who propagated his ideas ceaselessly. Pierre himself made every possible effort with his pen to establish that nudity and promiscuous intermingling of the sexes were perfectly justified, rather laudable. In the same book, *Aphrodite*, he eulogises Greece for her best period thus :

> ". . . the time when naked humanity, the most perfect form that we can know or even conceive, since we believe it to be made to God's image, can unveil itself under the lineaments of a consecrated courtesan before the twenty thousand pilgrims . . . ; where the most sensual love, the divine love from which

e were born, was without defilement, without shame, without sin; . . ." (Paul Bureau, p. 115).

At another place, he has expressed himself more explicitly. He proposed

"to combat by the most energetic moral teaching the abominable opinion that motherhood can be under any circumstances dishonourable, illegitimate, or disgraceful". (P. 116).

20th Century Developments

Thus far had developed ideas in the 19th century when writers of the 20th century appeared, who aspired to soar even higher than their forerunners. In 1908, a play entitled, *Le Lys*, was published by Pierre Wolff and Gaston Leroux, in which two girls have been shown explaining to their father the horrors of their position and their right to free love, in the presence of their brother. Their main contention is to show how terrible it is for a young girl to pass life without engaging in "free love". The old father censures his daughters for having illicit relations with a young man. The daughter replies :

"Yet I could not make you understand, because you have never understood that one has not always the right to ask a girl, though she may be your sister or your daughter, to become an old woman without having loved . . ." (P. 117).

World War I not only provided impetus to this freedom movement but also it took it to its extreme logical conclusions. The anti-conceptionist movement had affected France in particular. For over forty years birth rate in that country had continually been falling. Only in 20 out of 87 French districts birth rate was higher than death rate. In the remaining districts, the case was just the reverse; so much so that in certain areas, the average death rate was as high as 130, 140, even 160, against every 100 births. When the War started, the French nation was already in the throes of life and death. This was a rude shock for the French statesmen to learn that the nation lacked in a sufficient number of fighting-fit young men. If, for the time being, they tried to save the nation by sacrificing the available few at the front, how would they counteract the next

onslaught ? The whole nation was in a fix. It could not survive, the leaders thought, except by raising the national birth rate by all possible means. This gave the campaign another direction. The writers, journalists, speakers, even scientists and politicians came out and raised one universal cry requiring the people to bring forth more and more children without bothering about marriage formalities. Any spinster or widow, they said, who offered her womb voluntarily in the service of the motherland, deserved to be honoured rather than censured. Lovers of freedom seized this opportunity for spreading among the people all their devilish ideas. A distinguished journalist of the time, who edited *La Lyon Republicain*, wrote while discussing the question : Why should rape be a crime ?

> "Science and philosophy, in dealing with the natural will, prove the universal imperiousness of a need, less frequent but not less imperious than hunger and thirst, and of which rape, too often followed by murder, is the enraged expression, as theft is the usual result of enraged distress. The attraction of the sexes forms part of the system of the universe, no less than gravitation. A healthy man, who is young and vigorous, can no more help his desires than he can his empty stomach listen to reason by a promise of food next week. The man dying of love in our cities where everything is abundant, ought to be as much of an anomaly as a man dying of hunger. As supplies of bread are distributed gratuitously, so we should seek the means to appease other hungry ones". (P. 121).

The reader should know that this article was not meant to amuse the people. It had been seriously written and was read equally seriously in France.

About the same time, the Paris Faculty of Medicine approved a doctoral thesis and published it in its official bulletin. It contained the following sentences also :

> "We hope the day will come when without cynical boasting or false modesty we shall say : 'I had syphilis at twenty years old,' just as we say now-a-days, 'I have been sent to the hills for spitting blood' . . . Whoever has passed his youth without contracting those troubles which are as it were the price of pleasure, is but an incomplete being who through

cowardice, a cold nature, or religious scruple, has missed the accomplishment of what is perhaps the least degraded of his natural functions". (P. 151).

Neo-Malthusian Literature

Before proceeding further let us consider the views that have been advanced in support of the anti-conceptionist movement. When towards the end of the 18th century, the British economist Malthus (1766—1834) presented his ideas on birth control with a view to imposing checks on the fast increasing population, it might not have crossed his mind that his innocent proposals just after one century would be *mainly* used *for* spreading adultery and promiscuity on an enormous scale. Malthus had only advised continence and marriage at advanced age in order to check increase in population. But when the neo-Malthusian Movement was initiated towards the end of the 19th century, it was asserted that the sexual urge was to be freely satisfied and its natural consequence, the birth of children, was to be scientifically controlled. This helped also to remove the last impediment from the way of free and promiscuous intermingling of the sexes. Now a woman could freely give herself up to a man, without fear of bringing forth children and enduring responsibilities. The consequences of this tendency will be described later. Here a few instances of the patent views most commonly found in the literature on birth control are presented.

Following is the logically built up thesis of the neo-Malthusian literature .

"Every human being invariably experiences three imperious needs : nourishment, rest and love. Nature has implanted them within us, and has had the foresight to attach enjoyment to their satisfaction. Logic would have man hasten to respond to this natural desire, and such is in fact his conduct with regard to the first two needs. But, on the contrary, it is astonishing to find that with regard to the third, he has adopted a completely different attitude ; society has invented the strange institution of monogamic and indissoluble marriage. Social morality forbids in fact every satisfaction of the sexual appetite outside of the marriage bond, and in the married state, which it declares

indissoluble, it imposes the duties of fidelity and of non-intervention in the reproductive work of nature.

"But this sexual morality, which we see hangs together, is really absurd; it defies both nature and reason, and, being false in its very principles, produces the worst consequences for humanity". (Paul Bureau, pp. 131-32).

Ideas that have been deduced from these premises may also be considered. Bebel, leader of the German Social Democratic Party, frankly says :

"Man and woman are merely animals ; can there be any question of marriage, of an indissoluble bond, between animals ?"

Dr. Drysdale says :

"Love is, like all our appetites, subject to change. To seek to fix it in one channel is to try to modify the laws of nature. Youth is specially given to this changeableness in conformity with the magnificent logical order of nature which ordains that our experiences should be multiplied . . . free union represents a higher morality than any other, because it is more conformable to natural laws, and at the same time because it proceeds more directly from feeling, passion, and disinterested love for "the inclination which determines it has a moral value which is lacking in those mercantile transactions which make of marriage a veritable prostitution . . . . the true guarantee for the becoming maintenance of the children is to be found, not in the empty name of marriage, but in the independence of the parents, especially that of the mother". (Pp. 136-37).

It will be noted how concepts are changing, or rather undergoing perversion. At first, efforts were made to make the people throw off their belief that adultery was anything morally bad so as to get marriage and illegal relationship recognized as of equal status. Now a step further has been taken. Marriage is being regarded with disfavour and extra-marital relations as morally superior.

At another place, Dr. Drysdale writes :

"One can only look on prostitution as a valuable and temporary substitute, while awaiting a better state of things. Instead of contempt it is gratitude that the human race owes to the unhappy ones who suffer for the cause of our sexual nature. They are

of extreme use to humanity. We must look on them as sexual martyrs". (P. 140).

Paul Bureau says :

"Under the influence of a licentious literature and an immoral stage, divorce and adultery, anti-conceptionist practices and abortion, are acclimatized in our plan of life. Five-and-twenty years ago the very words aroused in the immense majority of people violent feelings of revulsion, even of profound horror and disgust. . . The automatic reflexes have lost their vigour because the moral atmosphere has changed". (P. 152).

J. S. Mill, famous British Philosopher, demands in his book, *On Liberty*, "that the marriage of indulgent persons should be forbidden by law, just as many German laws at that time only allowed marriage to those who could show that they had sufficient means". (Pp. 390-91). But when the question of the eradication of prostitution arose in England, the same Philosopher opposed it tooth and nail. His argument was that it was tantamount to curbing personal liberty and insulting the workmen who could not be treated like children.

In other words, personal freedom is meant to enable people to commit adultery. But if somebody wants to take advantage of this freedom for the purpose of marriage, his right to it should be questioned. In this latter case not only will the law be allowed to interfere with the personal freedom of the individual but such an action will also satisfy the moral scruple of the freedom-loving economist. This clearly shows that moral concepts have undergone extreme perversion. Good has come to be regarded as evil and evil as good.

CHAPTER 5

Tragic Consequences—I

LITERATURE shows the way, public opinion follows the lead, and finally collective morality, social customs and state law, all give way. Such a change becomes inevitable, especially when all the propaganda devices and techniques besides philosophy, history, ethics, science, literature, art, etc., have worked together persistently for a hundred and fifty years or so to mould man's way of thinking after a particular pattern. Then, it is unlikely that the law of the land remains unaffected by the changing public opinion in a country where government and social institutions are run on democratic principles.

Industrial Revolution and its Impact on Society

Besides this, other cultural factors in the West also became favourable to pave the way for Industrial Revolution. The impact of this on the economic and socio-cultural life reinforced the trends which the revolutionary literature had already given them. The concept of personal freedom, which is the basis of Capitalism, received an extraordinary impetus from the invention of the machine and the consequent possibilities of mass production. The capitalist class established big industrial and commercial concerns with the result that the new centres of industry and business soon grew into huge cities. Hundreds of thousands of people began leaving the countryside for the cities, and life became expensive. Housing facility diminished and the cost of clothing, food and other necessities of life soared high. Partly due to the cultural advancement and partly to the keenness shown by the capitalists, numerous new luxuries became part of life. But the capitalist system did not distribute wealth equitably so as to enable the common man also to possess the means of affording all those comforts, pleasures and enjoyments of new life. It did not even provide him with enough means to acquire easily the barest minimum necessities of life—house,

food, clothes, etc.—in the cities to which he had been attracted. Consequently, maintaining of the wife became burdensome to the husband and rearing of the children became troublesome to the father. Not to speak of maintaining others, it became difficult for individuals even to maintain themselves. Economic conditions forced every member of the family to become an earning member. Gradually all classes of women, married and unmarried and widows, had to come out to earn their bread, and with the increase in the opportunities for free intermingling of the sexes, natural consequences began to follow. At this the society felt very much perturbed. Now the concept of personal freedom and the new ethics came forward to console fathers and daughters, brothers and sisters, husbands and wives, telling them not to feel ill at ease, as all that was happening was desirable. It was not degeneration but emancipation; it was not immoral but the enjoyment of life. The pit towards which the capitalist was driving them was not Hell, it was Heaven, real Heaven!

Capitalist Selfishness

Not only that but the concept of personal freedom on which was raised the superstructure of Capitalism provided the individual with an open and unconditional license to earn wealth by all means, fair or foul. The new ethics taught him that every means by which wealth could be amassed was lawful and fair, no matter whether the prosperity of one individual led to the ruin of many. Thus, the new-emerging social order favoured the individual's interests in every way against those of society, and the latter was not provided with any safeguard against the former's greed and avarice. This opened new ways for the selfish individuals to use society to their advantage. They discovered each weakness of man and exploited it for selfish ends in all possible ways. One came forward and gave the people the habit of drinking in order to make high profits on his business, and no one cared to save society from this plague-stricken mouse. Another one laid the snare of usury, and no one dared save the people from this blood-sucking leech. Contrary to that, such laws were made as favoured the leech so that it could suck as much blood out of others as it could. A third one

invented novel ways of gambling which soon infected all walks of commerce and trade, and no one had the courage to safeguard man's economic life from the onslaught of this enteric fever. During this impious age of the individual's revolt and aggressive sinfulness, it was impossible that the selfish people did not think of the weakest point of man, his urge for sex, which could be easily exploited for the purpose of coining money. And this weakness was fully exploited, in diverse ways. Services of beautiful women were obtained for theatres, ballrooms and film-making centres. They were made to appear nude before the people in order to arouse their sexual appetite and deprive them of their pockets. Some people hired out women and developed prostitution to the level of an organized international trade. Some others invented new ways and manners of make-up and publicized them widely so as to arouse the female urge for beautification to the point of craze with a view to making money. Others designed sex-arousing, semi-covering dresses and appointed charming women to wear them and go about in society with a view to tempting young men in large numbers. This naturally made these dresses popular among young girls and the designers earned high profits. Some other people thought of printing nude pictures and cheap sensual literature. They helped bring about a general moral degeneration among the common people, but were able to fill their purses with gold. Gradually things came to such a pass that no sphere of trade and commerce remained immune from the sex element. Business advertisements were regarded incomplete without a nude or semi-nude female picture. No hotel, no restaurant, no showroom could be imagined without a lady attendant in order to attract men. Poor, helpless society could safeguard its interests only in one way, by counteracting the individualist onslaught by its own moral precepts and thwarting the demon of sexual hunger. But the capitalistic system was too broadbased to be so easily frustrated. It had the support and backing of a complete philosophic system and a strong variegated literature which was busy corrupting the moral values and precepts. Obviously, the ideal murderer is the one who can coax the one to be murdered to come forward cheerfully and lay down his head willingly.

Democratic Politics

On top of that, this concept of liberty gave birth to the democratic system of government in the West. This served as a powerful factor in bringing to completion the revolution in moral values. The main principle underlying Western democracy is that people themselves possess the sovereign as well as legislative rights. They can frame whatever laws they like and can amend or repeal any laws which they dislike. They do not have above them any higher authority immune from human frailties, whose guidance and instruction may be binding on man and may prevent him from going astray. They do not possess any fundamental law which may be unquestionable and beyond human manipulation, repeal or amendment. They do not have a standard for judging right from wrong, which does not change with every human whim and fancy, but which can stand unimpeachable for all times. Thus, modern democracy looks upon man as wholly independent and unaccountable and makes him his own legislator, and so renders all legislative business dependent on majority opinion.

Obviously, when laws pertaining to community life depend on public opinion for their passage, and when governments become faithful worshippers of the god of modern democracy, no power of law and order can save society from moral iniquity. Not to speak of saving, it will rather help ruin it eventually. With every change in the trend of public opinion the law will also change. As the common man's concepts undergo change, principles and bases of law will accordingly be affected. A mere proposal, however, petty and immoral, which has the public backing to muster just 51 out of 100 votes, can readily attain the status of sacred law. The worst instance of this appeared in the pre-Nazi Germany. Dr. Magnus Hirsch Feld who has been a President of the World League of Sexual Reform, vehemently advocated the adoption of the unnatural act for as long as six years. At last the god of democracy became inclined to regard this unlawful act as lawful, and the German Parliament decided by a majority vote that the unnatural act was no longer a crime, provided that it was carried out with willingness on both sides. If, however, the subject was a minor, his guardian would perform the 'giving away' ceremony !

Law has rather been lukewarm in worshipping the god of democracy. It obeys his commands but somewhat indifferently. This lack of keenness is supplemented by the administrative machinery of the government. People who conduct the business of the democratic governments fall a prey to the influence of the literature, moral philosophies and current trends even before they are accorded legal sanction. Thus the prevailing moral abuses become officially recognized with the result that the police and courts of justice hesitate to practically enforce the law, and the abuses attain lawfulness indirectly. Take for instance the case of procuring illegal abortion. It is prohibited in the Western law, but there is no country where it is not openly and commonly practised. In England alone at least 90,000 cases of abortion occur annually. According to an estimate, at least 25 per cent of the married women perform abortion on themselves, or obtain the services of experts. Among the unmarried, the percentage is even higher. In certain places there are regular clubs to facilitate abortion, which are maintained by weekly subscriptions by women themselves, so that they may obtain services of experts as and when required. In London there exist quite a few nursing homes where most of the patients are generally the women who have had abortion.[1] In spite of all this, abortion is still a crime according to the British law.

Facts and Figures

Now I shall deal at length with the three factors—modern moral concepts, capitalistic civilization and democratic politics and examine how they are working together to disrupt collective morality and the sex relation between the male and the female, and what results they have actually produced. Since I have mostly mentioned France so far which is the birthplace of this movement, I shall again draw on the same source for facts and figures.[2]

Moral Bankruptcy

When the above-mentioned concepts spread they first deprived

1. All these details contained in Prof. Joad's *Guide to Modern Wickedness* which has recently been published from London.

2. Most of this information has been drawn from *Towards Moral Bankruptcy* (London, 1955), by Paul Bureau, a distinguished French sociologist.

the people of their moral sense in sexual affairs. Modesty and the sense of honour began to forsake them. The distinction between marriage and illicit relationship was given up, and forniciation was recognized as lawful and clean, which had nothing sinful or vicious about it to be concealed and hushed up.

Towards the end of the 19th century, French people had begun looking upon fornication as an ordinary, natural act for the male. Parents did not at all mind their sons' moral delinquency, provided that it did not involve them in criminal cases and venereal diseases. Rather they felt pleased if it helped them materially. They thought that a man's extra-marital relation with a woman was in no way bad. There are instances to show that parents themselves encouraged their young sons to establish relations with influential and wealthy ladies in order to make their future secure and bright. But as regards woman, the concept was quite different. Female chastity was still valued highly. The parents who did not seriously mind their sons' delinquency, youthful pranks,were not prepared to stand any blot of infamy on the person of their daughter. The French society could tolerate a fornicator, but it detested a fornicatress; it loathed the prostitute, but it exempted from blemish the man visiting her. Similarly, the moral responsibility of a man and woman bound in wedlock was not regarded as equal. A husband could freely go about sowing his wild oats, but a wife's promiscuous behaviour was regarded with disgust.

As the 20th century approached, conditions totally changed. The movement for the emancipation of women which had propagated moral equality between the sexes gave the promiscuous couple equal status in society. Now a woman could freely have extra-marital relations with a man without any fear of public disgrace. Paul Bureau says:

> "Many young men in the working-class circles of our great towns do not consider they have the right to demand from their fiancee a chastity which they do not possess themselves, and the license of which both avail themselves appears too precious for them to object to it. These new manners begin to penetrate even to our country districts. In the Yonne, in certain parts of Burgundy, and elsewhere, it often happens that the girl has

contracted several "friendships" before contracting marriage, and no trouble is even taken to hide them. As there is no fear of the complications of pregnancy, still less of the birth of a child, the relations shut their eyes, and on the wedding day the bridegroom, who knows to what he is committing himself takes care not to find fault with a freedom of which the lads of the village take plentiful advantage during the ten or twelve years before their marriage. . . . ."

"Those who attentively follow the modern evolution of our manners know that, during the last fifteen years, one meets more and more frequently, in Paris, the great towns and the industrial centres, such a case as this. A girl—modiste, dress maker, typist, shop-assistant, bank-clerk, or student—fairly educated, of good character, used to a good social environment, . . . resolves one day to set up housekeeping with a young man. No marriage, not because it is understood there will be no children. . . but because it is understood that each preserves complete liberty to end the union any moment that the friend ceases to please. . .; an establishment that merely means living together, and does not imply at each moment any engagement for the next. On the other hand, there is no element of fraud or seduction ; both are equally aware of the nature and scope of their mutual relation. . . ."

". . . it was inaugurated by the industrial workers; at first it caused surprise and some scandal, then it made way in higher social grades, and has extended continually. . . This extra legal union is similar in every way to those which every day, and in great number, receive the official seal of the registrar or the minister of religion". (Pp. 94-96).

Such a "companion" has now earned recognition of the society also. M. Berthelemy, Professor of Law at Paris, writes that the "companion" has gradually attained the same legal status as was once monopoly of the lawful wife. She has secured the interest of Parliament, and she is now protected by the administration. A soldier's "companion" is allowed the same maintenance as is allowed to his wife; after his death she is granted the same amount of pension as is granted to his legal widow.

How ordinary and minor a thing has fornication come to regarded in the French moral code can be seen from the following instances. In 1918 a school mistress was found pregnant, being unmarried. Some old-fashioned people in the Education Department demanded her dismissal. Then a deputation comprising some responsible people waited on the Education Ministry, and their following arguments were found so convincing that the case involving the mistress was shelved :

(1) "Private life concerns nobody".
(2) "What has she done wrong?"
(3) "Is not illegitimate maternity more democratic?"

Among other important things taught to French soldiers as part of their training one necessary lesson is how to use contraceptive devices and protect oneself against venereal diseases. Obviously, such lessons are imparted on the presumption that every soldier shall commit fornication. On the 3rd of May, 1919, the Commander of 127 Division issued an instruction to his soldiers which read as follows :

"Monopoly of Public Brothels by Tirailleurs. The General has received various anonymous letters from chasseurs, infantry, and cavalry, complaining that they cannot find accommodation in the 'maisons de tolerance', which are monopolized by the tirailleurs in great crowds, who remain too long and have caused frequent disturbances. The High Court of the Sarre and the municipal authorities are taking measures to increase considerably the effective force of the prostitutes. But, until this can be done, the tirailleurs must be more expeditious over their pleasures".

One should remember that this instruction was officially published by the defence department of a most civilized national government. This shows that the society, the law, the administration, all had wholly lost the sense of fornication being a sin."[1]

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1. What would happen to the honour and self-respect of a vanquished nation at the hands of such a morally depraved army can well be imagined. Contrary to this moral standard of soldiery, there is another standard presented by the Qur'an :

"When We give them authority in the earth, they establish *salat*, pay *zakat* enjoin what is good and forbid what is evil" (22 : 41) *(Cont. on p. 45*

A short time before World War I, an agency was established in France on the principle that every woman, whatever her condition, her surroundings, her fortune or her habitual moral conduct, could always be persuaded for "a new experience". It announced that any man who wished to have relations with a lady should only take the trouble of communicating her address and send twenty-five francs for expenses. Then, persuading the lady for the "business" was the agency's business. The registers maintained by the agency revealed that a large number of people from all classes of the French society had carried out "business" through it, "under the official protection of the police and the municipal authority". (P. 16).

> "Let it be enough to say that immorality between near relatives, even sometimes between father and daughter, and between brother and sister, are not very uncommon in certain districts of France and certain populous quarters of our great towns". (P. 35).

Prevalence of Obscenity

M. Bulot who was the Attorney-General of France before World War I, estimated at half a million the number of women who sold their body. French postitutes cannot be compared to the prostitutes here. They belong to a cultured and civilized country, so their business is conducted in a more orderly and modern fashion. They avail of all the facilities provided by the art of advertising. Newspapers, printed and illustrated cards, telephone, personal calls, in short, all "civilized" ways to attract the people's attention are fully employed by them; and the public conscience is not pricked. On the contrary, the women who attain extraordinary success in their business are highly esteemed, so much so that they begin to dominate political and financial affairs as well as the administration. It will be recalled that such a triumph had once upon a time been achieved by the women of the same class in the Greek society also.

Cont. from p. 44)

There is a soldier who goes about sowing his wild oats, and there is a soldier who takes the risk of his life in order to protect human moral values and teach the world lessons of piety and purity. Has man become so depraved that he cannot distinguish between the two?

M. Ferdinand Dreyfus, a member of the French Senate, stated a few years ago that prostitution was no longer an isolated fact, but had become a full-fledged business and an organized industry on account of its being a great money-yielding agency. It has its recruiting agents who gather the "raw stuff", its travellers who move from place to place and its markets which deal in the import and export of young, litte girls, especially those under ten years old. Paul Bureau says :

"Here again we find ourselves facing, not isolated acts, the result of chance meetings or inexperience ; but a powerful organisation, duly officered and systematized with the object of putting itself at the disposal of unmarried men who wish to use their sexual activity without incurring the responsibilities which nature has attached to that function. A numerous body of publicists and lecturers, physicians and apothecaries, midwives and commercial travellers, using the most up-to-date methods of advertisement and demonstration, has assumed as its special mission the instruction of an ever-growing clientele in the vast apparatus which a perfectly developed technique places at its disposal". (Pp. 21-22).

Besides this, prostitution is rampant in hotels, cafes and dancing halls, where women sometimes are subjected to inhuman treatment. Once in 1912 a mayor of Eastern France had to intervene and rescue a girl who had been subjected to sexual gratification by forty-seven customers during the day, and there were others eagerly awaiting their turn in the queue.

Besides commercial houses of prostitution, "charity brothels" were opened during World War I. Those patriotic women who "served" the War heroes defending France were rewarded with fatherless children and honoured with the title of "War godmothers", an idea which cannot be suitably rendered into Urdu. These women adopted prostitution in a systematized way and the clients felt morally bound to "help" them. Leading dailies of France, especially *Fantasio* and *La Vie Parisienne*, the two illustrated journals, served them most by drawing the people's attention to them. At the beginning of 1917, a single number of the latter journal had as many as 199 such offers advertised.

Sexuality and Indecency

Such a prevalence of obscenity and licentiousness is in fact the result of emotional excitement which is caused by literature, pictures, cinema, theatre, dancing and nude and immoral public performances.

There is a horde of selfish capitalists who are doing their worst to arouse the people's sexual appetite with a view to making money. Dailies and weeklies, illustrated journals, fortnightlies and monthlies, all publish highly exciting articles and shameful pictures, for they can thus ensure quick increase in their circulation. Intellectual capabilities, artistic skills, and psychological tact are used to entrap and influence people. Besides, highly impious literature in the shape of pamphlets and books on sex problems is regularly published in editions as large as 50,000 each, most often running into scores of reprints. Some publishing houses have specialised in the publication of such literature. Many a writer has climbed the ladder of eminence and glory in this way. Now it is no longer disgraceful for an author to write a licentious book. If it runs into many editions, its success may lead to a chair in the Academy, or at least to the Croix d' honneur.

The government looks on these shameless, sex-arousing activities with unconcern. Very seldom has it happened that some highly obscene thing is published and the police reluctantly register a criminal case. But then, there are liberal courts of law who deem it is sufficient just to admonish the defaulters, for the people who preside over these courts are themselves accustomed to draw pleasure out of such literature. Even some of the judges themselves are writers of obscene books. If by chance a magistrate happens to be old-fashioned and the writers smell "injustice" at his hands, renowned scholars and litterateurs come out and raise one universal voice through the press, calling for a free and unfettered atmosphere for the progress of art and literature. They vehemently oppose all sorts of moral restrictions for these according to them reflect the mentality of the dark ages, and are imposed with a view to curbing fine art !

Now let us see how this fine art is developed. It is developed

mainly by means of nude pictures and illustrated albums which are prepared in millions and offered for sale not only in the market, hotels and cafes but also in schools and colleges. M. Emile Pouresy who presented a report to the Second National Congress against immorality, remarked :

> "These filthy photographs produce an incredible disturbance of the senses, and tend to urge the unfortunate people who buy them to the most monstrous crimes. Their distintegrating action upon boys and girls is fearful, and have seen many colleges ruined morally and physically by their means. For girls there is no more powerfully destructive agent". (P. 42).

The same fine arts are being developed through recreational activities at theatres, cinema and music-halls, and cafes. The dramas that are presented on the French stage and are witnessed keenly by high class French society, and whose authors, producers and artistes receive universal applause, are one and all replete with sexuality and obscenity. The salient feature of such performances usually is that the morally worst character is presented as an ideal worthy of respect and imitation. According to Paul Bureau, the life portrayed and presented by the French dramatists can only give a cultural onlooker the impression that married couples in France are by and large deceitful and disloyal matrimonially. He says :

> "Who does not know, in France or among foreigners how perseveringly our dramatic authors have devoted themselves, these last thirty years, to place on the stage all the most scandalous passages of adultery and free love, of licentious life and of divorce? Under the pretence of representing the manners of our time, one would imagine that France had none but unfaithful spouses, no husbands except boors and fools,. . . it goes without saying that the impulse to which the leading character yields is irresistible, and the playwright would be disgraced if he introduced on the boards people capable of respecting the laws of traditional morality". (P. 43).

From this may be judged the condition of the theatres and recreations meant for the people at large. The language, the coquettish behaviour and the nudeness that can satisfy these wretched,

licentious people emotionally is presented freely on the stage. "It goes without saying that the obscenity of the bills and advertisements announces and ensures the obscenity of the performance. This is what is called free or realistic stage". Emile Pouresy has presented in his report several instances which he collected from various recreation centres. He has preferred to use alphabetic letters to names :

> "At B, monologues and songs are grossly obscene; the tableaux and dramatic scenes go so far as to picture the sexual relations. The audience—there are more than a thousand distinguished spectators—applaud frantically. At N, the little songs, the most obscene monologues, and some gestures which are veritable public outrages on chastity, are applauded by children and young people under the approving eyes of their parents. At L, a very numerous audience calls five times the 'cabotin' who ends his turn with the most lascivious little song imaginable. ". . . at R, a mixed audience noisily recalled the singer of an exceptionally obscene item. On this occasion the 'cabotin' grew angry, and in middle of her performance, called out indignantly : "Dirt that you are. . . you don't see that there are children here", and, without finishing, retired to the green-room. (P. 45) "At X, the performers at a cafe-chantant are put into a lottery; they themselves offer tickets at ten centimes each; the winner can keep the woman and her room for the night; the key is outside the bargain". (P. 16).

Paul Bureau writes that most often utterly naked women are presented on the stage who form the chief part of these performances. M. Adolphe Brisson once protested against such performances in the famous French newspaper, *Temps*, remarking :

> "We are driven to wish that the sexual act might take place on the stage. . . ." (P. 46).

Indeed the perfection of "art" will be achieved only then !

The so-called scientific and medical literature on contraception and sexual science has also helped to spread obscenity and pervert public morality. Conception and related matters, and the use of contraceptive devices are so freely described by lectures and the magic lantern in public meetings, and by illustrative notes in publications, that nothing remains hidden or unexplained. Similarly,

books on sex treat in detail of all aspects of sex anatomy under the cover of science, so as to remain above censure. Now the propagation of such things is being labelled as the "service of humanity". The writers and publishers say that they want to save the people from sexual lapses. But the fact is that this literature and this mass training have caused the spread of extreme forms of obscenity among men, women and the youth. The result is that a young girl in school who has not yet attained full physical maturity possesses such knowledge about sex as could never be imagined by married woman before. Same is the case with young, immature boys. Their base emotions become aroused before time and they begin craving for sexual experience. Thus, before they attain puberty, they become accustomed to sexual gratification. There is an age limit prescribed for marriage, but for such ventures there is no age limit. The youth begin embarking on these from 12 or 13 years onward.

Signs of National Collapse

When moral depravity, self-worship and sensual indulgence have touched such extremes; when men and women, the young and old, have got lost in sexual craze; and when man has been completely perverted by sex incitements, natural consequences leading a nation to total collapse will inevitably follow. People who witness the progress and prosperity of such declining nations, which indeed "stand on the very brink of an abyss of fire", are led to conclude that their self-indulgence is not impeding their progress, it is rather accelerating it. They think that a nation is at the peak of its prosperity when its people are highly self-indulgent. But this is a sad conclusion. When the constructive and the destructive forces are both working side by side and the constructive aspect on the whole seems to have an edge over the destructive aspect, it is wrong to count the latter among factors leading to the former. Only an insane person can draw such an inference.

Take for instance the case of a clever merchant who is earning high profits by dint of his intelligence, hard work and experience. But at the same time if he is given to drink, gamble and lead a care-free life, will it not be misleading to regard both these sides

of his life as contributing to his well-being and prosperity ? As a matter of fact, the first set of qualities is helping him to prosper, whereas the second set is pulling him down. If on account of the positive qualities he is flourishing, it does not mean that the negative forces are ineffective. If one cares to look a little deeper one will see that these forces are in fact eating into his very vitals as well as into his fortune. They are indeed laying in ambush for a chance to make a surprise and decisive attack on him. It may be that the devil of gambling brings his whole fortune to nought in a moment, and he is lying in wait for such a chance. It may be that the devil of drinking leads him to commit a fatal mistake rendering him bankrupt in no time, and he is lying in wait for such a chance. It may be that the devil of sexual indulgence leads him to commit murder or suicide, or to some other calamity. One cannot imagine how prosperous and triumphant he would have been had he not fallen a prey to these devils.

Similar is the case with a nation. In the beginning it receives impetus from constructive forces, but then due to lack of proper guidance it takes but a few steps in the right direction, and begins gathering round it the means of its own destruction. For a while the constructive forces drag it along under the momentum already gained. But the destructive forces that are working simultaneously, weaken it so much that one stray shock can send it sprawling to its doom. Here we shall briefly mention the main causes of the French nation's decline which were the direct result of its wrong social system.

Decay of Physical Energy

In the first place, the French people's sexual indulgence has gradually resulted in the loss of their physical strength. Ever-present emotional situations have broken down their power of resistance. Craze for sexual pleasures has left them with little or no forbearance, and the prevalence of venereal diseases has affected their national health fatally. Ever since the beginning of the 20th century, after every couple of years or so, the French military authorities have had to lower standards of physical fitness for new entrants, because young men coming up to the previous standards

have day by day become rarer. This measure, with the accuracy of a thermometer—precisely indicates how fast has the French nation been losing its physical strength. Venereal diseases are a major cause of its decline. During the first two years of World War I, the number of French soldiers who had to be hospitalized on account of syphilis was estimated at 75,000. In a garrison town of average importance, 242 soldiers were found suffering from this disease simultaneously. Imagine for a while the predicament in which the French nation was involved. On the one hand, it was facing a life and death situation and stood badly in need of the sincerest effort by every single soldier for its survival : each franc was precious, each second of time and each ounce of energy valuable, and all possible resources were called for in national defence. And on the other, thousands of young men lay useless for months together on account of sexual dissipation, and were thus becoming instrumental in squandering national wealth and resources on treatment at such a critical time.

According to Dr. Leredde, a French specialist, about 30,000 deaths are caused every year in France by syphilis and its immediate or ultimate results, which is the second biggest cause of death after tuberculosis. And syphilis is not the only venereal disease.

Disruption of Family System

In the second place, free sexual indulgence and licentiousness has disrupted the family system in France. It is marriage that gives birth to family life, binding the man and the woman together permanently. It is from the matrimonial bond that individuals draw peace of mind, firmness and steadfastness in life. It is this bond which diverts their individualism into collective channels and presses the anarchic trends into the service of culture and civilization. It is the family relationship that creates an atmosphere of love and peace and fellow-feeling so essential for the proper development of morality, right conduct and character among the new generations. But the family system can neither be established nor can it work in a country where men and women have completely lost sight of marriage and its purpose, where sexual relation is aimed at gratifying sexual urge only, and where hosts of pleasure-seeking men and women are

keenly and constantly going about sucking juice from every flower. In an environment such as this, the people are soon deprived of their capabilities to shoulder responsibilities of matrimony, its obligations and rights and sustain the moral discipline that it brings. This mental and moral state leads to and results in the deterioration of calibre with every new generation. Individuals become so selfish and self-conceited that community life begins to disintegrate. They become so fickle-minded that their national as well as international behaviour begins to suffer from a lack of confidence and stability. Without the peace of mind that accrues from home life, lives of individuals become devoid of sweetness and light, and a state of perpetual restlessness deprives them of all peace and tranquillity. This is indeed the torment of this-worldly hell that man goes in for in a fit of senseless pleasure-seeking.

Hardly 7 or 8 per thousand people in France enter wedlock annually. This low percentage clearly indicates that there are big chunks of French population that are unmarried. Among the few married ones there are even fewer who live chaste or marry with a view to living a morally clean life. Apart from this, they have all sorts of motives while entering matrimony, one common motive being to legitimize the child born or conceived before marriage. Paul Bureau writes that it has almost become a custom among the French working classes that a woman, before marriage, must have the assurance of her would-be husband to recognize a child who is not his. In 1917, a woman stated before the Civil Tribunal of the Seine:

> "By these present I declare to my husband. That in our union I have only the object of legitimizing the children born of our "free" union, . . . and not that of resuming our life together. I leave him on the day of our marriage at 5.30 p.m., in order to escape from conjugal duties which I have no intention of fulfilling; I give him by these present a deed of separation, to serve towards what is necessary in order to obtain a divorce". (P. 55).

The Principal of a great college of Paris told Paul Bureau :

> "At the present time, many young men see in marriage nothing but the means of securing a mistress at home. . . . For ten or twelve years they have roved a little in all directions, tasting various forms of licentiousness in various degrees. A day comes

when they tire of this restless and irregular life; they take a lawful wife, convinced that with her will be combined the advantages of safety and tranquillity with those of a licentiousness, modified indeed but still sufficient and refined, to suit a less exacting appetite." (P. 56).

Fornication in France has come to be regarded as an act that does not entail any censure at all. If a man keeps a mistress besides his wife he need not conceal her. The society does not at all mind it, for individuals are within their rights to do so.

In such circumstances as these, the marriage bond has become too weak to stand any stress or strain. Sometimes it does not even last for more than a few hours. A French dignitary who had several times held ministerial rank obtained divorce from his wife just five hours after the marriage ceremony. Sometimes very minor and silly things cause divorces. For instance, snoring by one of the partners or one's disliking a dog. Once the Civil Tribunal of the Seine nullified 294 marriages at one sitting in a single day. In 1884, when the new divorce law was passed, four thousand divorces were decided. In 1900 the number went up to 7,500, in 1913 it was 16,000, and in 1931, 21,000.

Genocide

Bringing up of children is a highly moral responsibility. It calls for self-discipline, selflessness, endurance and a high altruistic spirit. Selfish and egoistic people who are completely possessed of individualist and animal desires cannot reconcile themselves to undertake such a responsibility.

For the last seventy years or so, France has been in the grip of anti-conceptionist propaganda. Consequently, each French man and French woman is now fully aware of all those devices by which they can enjoy all the pleasures of the sexual relation and yet escape the natural consequences thereof, *i.e.*, conception and procreation. There is no city, no town, no village, where contraceptive drugs and appliances are not sold in open market and made available to all and sundry. The result is that not only the sexually promiscuous people use them freely but also the married couples have taken quite a fancy to them. Now every man and woman desire that they

should somehow avoid a child, the bugbear of their comfort and pleasure. From the constantly falling birth-rate in France, experts have estimated that on the average 600,000 births are prevented annually in that country by contraceptive devices.

Conceptions that take place in spite of these devices are precipitated by abortion, and thus another 400,000 births are prevented. Abortions are not only procured by unmarried women but married women also go in for these in large numbers. Morally this act is regarded blameless and right for women. Though it is still a crime according to law, the law has ceased to look upon it seriously. Hardly one case out of three hundred odd cases is registered, and 75 per cent of the culprits are acquitted by the courts. Medical devices for performing abortion have been so much simplified that most women can themselves perform abortion; and those who cannot are readily provided with expert aid. Destroying the young one in the womb has become as simple and common a thing for the people as getting an aching tooth extracted.

This craze has so corrupted maternal feelings that the mother whose love has always been proverbial has become fed up with her own offspring. If in spite of the contraceptive devices and attempts at abortion, some babies do succeed in seeing the light of the day, they are given inhuman treatment. Paul Bureau expresses this tragic fact in the following words :

> "From time to time the newspapers report the martyrdom of children whom their parents ill-treat, torture or cripple; but besides these cases there is the suffering, of which neighbours are aware, of those other unwanted little ones who are blamed for having come into the world, for having disturbed the pleasure and selfishness of the others. For lack of courage people shrink from abortion in order to stop a pregnancy which "ought not" to have occurred, but the innocent child will pay for the misadventure." (P. 74).

This malicious attitude has touched extreme limits. Once a working girl was so much delighted at the death of her six-month-old child that she danced and sang out of sheer joy by its corpse and exclaimed :

"We certainly won't have another. My husband and I are

greatly relieved by this one's death. Think what a little baby is; it cries all the time, it dirties its clothes, and one is never done with it". (P. 75).

The more tragic part of it is that this calamity is spreading fast, and the government and law courts are not taking due notice of it but are treating it lightly like the cases of abortion. For instance, in February 1918, two girls were produced before the Court of Assize for the Loire district on the charge of killing their babies, and both were acquitted. One of them had drowned her infant, though her relatives had offered to bring up the child, as they had done in the case of another to whom she had previously given birth. But the mother was determined not to let it live. The Court let her off observing that her crime was pardonable. The other girl had strangled her baby, and when she found it was yet living she had knocked it against a wall. This woman was also acquitted by the French judges and jury. In March 1918, a dancer was put before the jury of the Seine. She had tried to tear out her infant's tongue, crushed its skull and cut its neck. She was also held innocent both by the judges and the jury !

A nation that develops such hatred and hostility against its own offspring cannot be saved from annihilation even by a miracle. New generations are necessary in order to continue the physical existence of a nation. If it turns against its own seed it is in fact turning against itself; it is committing suicide.[1]

Even if there is no external enemy it will annihilate itself in due course of time. As I have pointed out above, birth-rate in France has constantly been falling for the last seventy years or so. Sometimes death-rate exceeds birth-rate, sometimes they are equal, and sometimes birth-rate exceeds death-rate hardly by one per thousand. As against this, immigrants in France are on the increase. In 1913, out of a total population of 416,000,000 in France, 2,890,000 were foreigners. If this state of affairs persists, it is not unlikely that by the close of the 20th century the French nation might

1. "More coffins than cradles", wrote a German author with regard to the French; and added, "Thus must disappear through their own fault the nations who have broken the fundamental laws of life". (P. 208).

well have been rendered a minority in its own homeland.[1]

This is in short the logical consequence of the movement which was initiated in the beginning of the 19th century for the rights and emancipation of women.

1. "This beautiful nation is committing suicide", said of the French, President Roosevelt. "A people whose women are not convinced that there is nothing more beautiful for them than to be a good wife and mother, is a people who has serious reason to be alarmed for its future". (*Conquest of Happiness* by Bertrand Russell, p. 209).—Tr.

CHAPTER 6

Tragic Consequences—II

ONLY for the sake of historical continuity we have dwelt on the moral concepts of France and their consequences there, but France is not isolated in this matter. Indeed all the countries that have adopted these concepts and the irrational, unnatural principles of community life are involved in a similar predicament. Take for instance the case of the United States of America where this social system has almost reached its zenith.

Sexual Delinquency Among American Children

Judge Ben Lindsey who in his capacity as President of the Juvenile Court at Denver availed himself fully of the opportunity to collect first hand information about the moral condition of the American youth, writes in his book, *The Revolt of Modern Youth*,[1] that American children are attaining maturity prematurely.

> "Sex overwhelms them before their minds and their powers of restraint and judgement are mature enough to cope with it. . . . We made a special study of 313 girls. We found that 265 of the 313 had come to physical maturity at 11 and 12 years, more of them maturing at 11 than at 12. . . . Such children, at 11 or 12 years, may have the desires and needs of the girl of 18 or older". (Pp. 81-82).

Dr. Edith Hooker writes in her book, *Laws of Sex*, that even in the cultured and well-to-do classes of society it is not uncommon to find girls, seven years old or so, involved in clandestine love affairs with boys of their own age group with whom sometimes they have sex relations also. She relates the case of a seven-year-old daughter of a respectable family who had her first sex experience with her own elder brother and some of his friends. Another group of five

1. Published from London by John Lane—The Bodley Head Ltd. (1932)

children, two girls and three boys, who happened to live next door to each other, were found having sex relations between them, and they also exercised similar influence over other children of their age. The oldest among them was just ten. Another 9-year-old girl who apparently lived under the care and protection of her parents had the privilege of being the sweetheart of a number of "lovers". (P. 328).

A physician of Baltimore has reported that within a year or so, more than a thousand cases of fornication with girls under 12 were tried in that city. (P. 177).

This is then the first fruit of the social environment charged with sexual excitement and licentiousness. An American author says that the social system under which most of the American population is living is so unnatural that boys and girls between ten and fifteen years of age start feeling that they are in love with each other. This results in grave consequences. Such premature sexual interest has always led to unfortunate happenings. The least that can happen is that adolescent girls run away with their friends, or get married in young age; and if they fail in love they commit suicide.[1]

Educational Stage

Children whose sexual feelings are awakened prematurely gain their first experiences while at elementary schools meant for boys or girls only or schools of co-education.

In the first type of schools the abuse of homo-sexuality and masturbation is fast spreading. For the feelings that are aroused in childhood and are incessantly stirred by incentives all around must crave for satisfaction. According to Dr. Hooker, many instances have come to notice in such schools, colleges, training schools for nurses and religious institutions, where members of the same sex have been found involved in homo-sexuality to the extent that they have lost all interest and desire for the opposite sex. She has mentioned in detail a great many cases where boys were found with

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1. "There is probably more emphasis on sex in America today than in any nation in history. American life is saturated with an unnatural and unhealthy emphasis on sex".

(*Now or Never*, by Dr. Smiley Blanton, p. 189)—Tr.

boys and girls with girls attached in homo-sexuality. Some other books also reveal how widely has homo-sexuality spread. Dr. Lowry has stated in his book, *Herself*, that once the Headmaster of a school confidentially informed forty families that their sons could not be kept at school as they had been found involved in "a highly dreadful immorality". (P. 179).

Take now the case of the second type of schools that have adopted co-education. Here, the incentives as well as the means of gratification are readily available. Sexual feelings that were awakened in childhood are further aroused here. Boys and girls read dirty sex-inciting literature. Love romances, pamphlets on so-called "art", cheap books on sex, articles providing contraceptive information, such is the reading material craved for by the young male and female students of these schools and colleges. Hendrich Von Loon, famous American author, says that the literature which is in great demand in the American universities is so obscene, licentious and indecent that the like of it was never so freely presented before public in history.

The information drawn from such literature then becomes the subject of frank and free discussion among young people of both the sexes, and thus equipped they advance towards practical experience. Boys and girls go out for petting parties where they freely drink and smoke and enjoy dancing and music.[1] According to Judge Lindsey, at least 45 per cent of the high school girls become sexually experienced before leaving school. This percentage is even higher in the later educational stages. He says :

> "The high-school boy is a much less dramatic figure than the high-school girl. Generally she sets the pace, whatever it is to be, and he dances to her piping". (P. 66).

Three Powerful Motives

In schools and colleges there exists some sort of discipline which hinders free inter-play of emotional activity. But as the young people leave the educational institutions and enter the world, their stirred up emotions and degenerate habits refuse to be bound by any restrictions. They find ever-present situations to excite them emotionally

1. *How I Can Get Married?*, p. 172.

as well as means to gratify their desires.

An American magazine has analysed the causes of this unprecedented prevalence of immorality. It says that a trinity of the following devilish forces has dominated the world of today and these are now working together to turn it into hell :

(*a*) Licentious literature which has increased in obscenity and circulation at a tremendous speed and spread unusually fast after World War I.

(*b*) The movies which not only arouse sexual hunger but also teach practical ways of satisfying it, and

(*c*) the depraved moral condition of women which is reflected by their attire, nudity, increasing smoking habits and their free and unrestricted intermingling with men.

These forces are becoming stronger day by day and they now seem to augur destruction for the Christian civilization and society. If these forces are not checked in time, the history of the West will not be any different from that of Rome and the other nations which lost their all on account of their sensual indulgence and licentiousness.

Prevalence of Sexual Promiscuity

Women in America who have adopted prostitution as a career have been estimated at five lacs. An American prostitute cannot be compared to her Indian counterpart. She is not a professional prostitute but a woman who was till recently an employee somewhere. She became sexually promiscuous on account of bad company and came to settle in the brothel. She will do her "business" here for a few years, and then revert to employment in some office or factory. Detailed case-study has shown that 50 per cent of the American prostitutes were once domestic servants; the remaining came after giving up service in hospitals, offices and shops. Mostly they enter upon this career between 15 and 20 years of age, and after attaining 25 to 30 years of age they generally leave the brothel to join some free profession.[1] This brings out the significance of the presence of five lac prostitutes in America who have adopted prostitution as a permanent career.

As has been pointed out above, prostitution in the West has

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1. *Prostitution in the United States*, pp. 64-69.

been organized as a business on international level. New York, Rio de Janeiro and Buenos Aires are the great centres of this business in America. The two principal houses of New York have their own separate administrative councils whose presidents and secretaries are regularly elected. These councils have appointed their legal advisers who safeguard their interests in the courts of law. There are thousands of agents who go about with a view to enticing away young girls for business. Sometimes these agents do roaring business. Once the President of the Immigrants' League of Chicago received during fifteen months the addresses of 7,200 girls who were coming to settle in the United States. On enquiry, it was found that 1,700 had reached their destination. The other 5,500 could not be traced!

Apart from brothels, there are plenty of assignation and call houses which are specifically maintained to enable gentlemen and ladies to have calls on each other. Investigations have shown that there were 78 such houses in one city, 43 in another, and 33 in a third one.[1] These houses are not only visited by unmarried ladies, but married women also throng them regularly. According to a famous reformer, at least one-third of the married population of New York is unfaithful matrimonially both from moral and physical points of view. And these conditions are not peculiar to New York, they hold true for every city and town in the United States.

An American committee of moral reformers popularly known as the Committee of Fourteen is earnestly engaged in tracing centres of immorality, studying the country's moral condition and devising practical measures for reforming morals on a large scale. Reports published by it have revealed that almost all ballrooms, night clubs, beauty saloons, manicure shops, message rooms and hair-dressing shops in America have turned into houses of prostitution; nay, their condition is even worse on account of the unspeakable wickedness being committed there.[2]

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1. *Prostitution in the United States*, p. 38.
2. The Weekly News magazine *TIME* in its Asia Edition, dated January 24, 1964, describes under the heading "Modern Living" : the "Second Sexual Revolution" that has taken place in America. The following brief excerpts are revealing :

[*Cont. on p.* 63

Venereal Diseases

Prevalence of sexual promiscuity has resulted in the prevalence of venereal diseases. According to an estimate about 90 per cent of the American population is afflicted with these diseases. *Encyclo-*

Cont. from p. 62]

"Now it sometimes seems that all America is one big Orgone Box . . . With today's model it is no longer necessary to sit in cramped quarters for a specific time. Improved and enlarged to encompass the continent, the big machine works on its subjects continuously, day and night. From innumerable screens and stages, posters and pages, it flashes the larger-than-life-sized images of sex. From countless racks and shelves, it pushes the books which a few years ago were considered pornography. From myriad loud-speakers, it broadcasts the words and rhythms of pop-music erotica. And constantly, over the intellectual Muzak, comes the message that sex will save you and libido make you free . . . The Greeks who have grown up with the memory of Aphrodite can only gape at the American goddess, silken and seminude, in a million advertisements. . . The U.S. seems to be undergoing a revolution of mores and an erosion of morals that is turning it into what Reich called a "sex affirming culture. . ."

"Parents, educators and the guardians of morality at large do pull themselves together to say "don't," "but they usually sound half-hearted. . . . No new Kinsey report or Gallup poll can chart the most private—and most universal—of subjects. . . ."

"American clothes nowadays manage to be both free and attractive . . . necklines are down, skirts are up, ski pants are tight, girdles are out, and figures are better than ever, to which there can be very few objections . . ."

"It is part and symptom of an era in which morals are widely held to be both private and relative, in which pleasure is increasingly considered an almost constitutional right rather than a privilege, in which self-denial is increasingly seen as foolishness rather than virtue. While science has reduced fear of long-dreaded earthly dangers, such as pregnancy and VD, skepticism has diminished fear of divine punishment. . . ."

". . . on the basis of Kinsey and a few smaller, more recent studies, the vast majority of American men and at least half the women now have sexual intercourse before marriage. . ."

"Dr. Graham Blaine Jr., estimates that within the past 15 years the number of college boys who had intercourse before graduation rose from 50% to 60%, the number of college girls from 25% to 40%. A Purdue sociologist estimates that one out of six brides is pregnant. . . ."

" . . . today (college boys) are generally looked down on if they can't succeed with a coed. . . ."

"In a way, the situation is the logical consequence of U.S. attitudes towards youth . . . the U.S. has set the young free, given them cars, given them prosperity, and yet still expects them to follow the rules . . ." [*Cont. on p.* 64

paedia Britannica reveals that in the government dispensaries an average of 2,00,000 cases of syphilis and 1,60,000 cases of gonorrhea are treated annually. 65 dispensaries have been set apart for such cases. But people by and large prefer private doctors to government dispensaries with the result that 61 per cent of the syphilis cases and

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Cont. from p. 64)

" . . . other girls consider a virgin down right square. The loss of virginity, even resulting in pregnancy, is simply no longer considered an American Tragedy. . . . ."

"The big new development is the oral contraceptive pill widely used and even more widely discussed both at college and at home. A considerate boy asks a girl politely, "Are you on pills?" If not, he takes the precautions himself. . . ."

"In spite of all this, the number of illegitimate children born to teen-age mothers rose from 8.4 per thousand in 1940 to 16 in 1961, in the 20-to-25 age group from 11.2 per thousand to 41.2."

" . . . when New York girls speak of a date as N.A.T.O., they mean contemptuously, "No Action, Talk Only."

" . . . the U.S. is forever trying to banish sin from the universe . . . and finding new sins to worry about . . . Psychoanalyst Rolls May believes that it has minimised extreme social anxiety but increased internal tension . . ."

"Historian Will Durant recently decided it was time to speak out, not only on sexual morality but on morals generally. Said he : "Most of our literature and social philosophy after 1850 was the voice of freedom against authority, of the child against the parent, of the pupil against the teacher. Through many years I shared in that individualistic revolt. I do not regret it ; it is the function of youth to defend liberty and innovation, of the old to defend order and tradition, and of middle age to find a middle way. But now that I too am old, I wonder whether the battle I fought was not too completely won. Let us say humbly but publicly that we resent corruption in politics, dishonesty in business, faithlessness in marriage, pornography in literature, coarseness in language, chaos in music, meaninglessness in art." (Pp. 48-53).

It will be interesting to note some of the comments by readers on this article, published in the *TIME* of January 31 and February 7, 1964 :

1. "We, as college students, would like to thank you for the frank, sincere and thought-provoking article."
2. "I cannot help but agree with the facts you exposed."
3. "I was fascinated. It was a brave effort to call attention to an existing evil. I appreciate the wealth of fact".
4. "Shock gave way to applause. It was monumental, inevitable, bitter, necessary and ultimately wholesome".
5. "Nauseating, depressing, heart breaking, such are the after-effects of your article on sex."—Tr.

89 per cent of the gonorrhea cases have to be treated and attended to by them. (Vol. XXIII, p. 45).

Thirty to forty thousand infant deaths every year are caused by hereditary syphilis. Total deaths caused by syphilis alone are more than those caused by all diseases other than tuberculosis.[1] According to gonorrhea specialists, about 60 per cent of the young men and women, both married and unmarried, suffer from this disease. Specialists of female diseases are agreed that operations performed on the genitals reveal 75 per cent gonorrheal infections.[2]

Divorce and Separation

In such conditions as these it is unlikely that the family system and the sacred marriage bond could survive. Women who earn their own bread, who do not stand in need of men except for sexual gratification, and who can easily have them without entering wedlock, look upon marriage as a useless institution. Modern thought and materialistic trends have rid their conscience of the feeling that having extra-marital relations with a man is anything vicious or sinful. This has rendered society also so insensitive that it does not abhor such women nor holds them worthy of censure. Judge Lindsey represents the feelings of the average American girl in this regard as follows :

> "Well Mary", I put in, "why don't you and Bill get married?" "Married !" she said derisively, "Why Judge, out of ten girls in my set who have gotten married in the last two years more than half are divorced or separated from their husbands . . . ." (P. 124).
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> "We believe we have a natural right to a companionship and an intimacy which we instinctively crave ; we have a knowledge of contraception which precludes the likelihood that unwanted babies will complicate the situation; we don't admit that such

1. "Each year syphilis kills 4,000 Americans, and in 1962 it infected a reported 20,000. Moreover, a recent survey conducted by the American Social Health Association in co-operation with the American Medical Association revealed that almost 90 per cent of syphilis cases go unreported. Expert opinion suggests that possibly 1,200,000 people are now afflicted with untreated syphilis" (*Readers Digest*, January 1964). -Tr.

2. "*Law of Sex,*" p. 204.

> a course on our part imperils the safety of human society ; and we believe that this effort to replace tradition with what we think is common sense will do good rather than harm." (P. 139)

One thing that can ever bring shameless women with such ideas round to marriage is the sentiment of love. But more often than not, this sentiment is only skin-deep, the result of momentary attraction. As soon as desires have been satisfied, the man and wife are hardly left with any attraction for each other. So mere difference of temperament or habit causes indifference between them, leading generally to law-suit for separation or divorce. Judge Lindsey says:

> "For every marriage in Denver during the year 1922 there was a separation. For every two marriage licenses issued there was a divorce suit filed. These figures are not limited to Denver alone. They are approximately correct for many cities of the United States." (P. 211).

Then he says :

> "So far as Denver is concerned I am sure, from a fairly reliable survey, and from information constantly coming to the officers of the Juvenile Court concerning social conditions in Denver, that the number of separations, including divorces, is now annually equal to the number of marriage licenses granted. And what is true of Denver is, as I have already said, just as true of other cities." (P. 214).

Some time back an article appeared in *The Free Press*, Detroit, containing the following ideas :

Neglect of legal matrimony, increase in the divorce rate and the prevalence of extra-marital relations between men and women show that man is reverting to animality. The natural urge for procreation is dying out, children are being less cared for, and the conviction that family and home life are indispensable for the well-being of civilization and independent polity is fast leaving him. On the contrary, one finds that man is becoming more and more unmindful, and very painfully so, of the tragic consequences confronted by civilization and society today.

To remedy the abuse of divorce and separation 'companionate marriage' has been proposed. But the remedy is worse than the disease. A companionate marriage means that a man and a woman

should live together for some time without being married in the "old fashion". If they find themselves agreeable to each other; they should solemnise marriage; otherwise they should separate to search for new companions. However, while they live together, they should avoid having children. Unluckily if they get one they will have to be bound in wedlock. This is called 'free love' in Russia.

National Suicide

Self-indulgence, avoidance of matrimonial responsibilities, indifference to family life and instability of the marriage bond have combined to almost kill the natural mother love, spiritually the purest and highest of the female sentiments, the basis of not only civilization but of the survival of human species itself. Contraceptive devices, abortions and destruction of offspring could become popular only after the death of this sentiment. In spite of all legal restrictions every young boy and girl in the United States possess anti-conceptionist information, and contraceptive drugs and appliances are freely sold in open market. Not to speak of common free woman, school and college girls also keep these things in readiness with them, so that if their friend by chance forgets these, a pleasant evening does not go unenjoyed.

Judge Lindsey says :

> "Out of 495 girls of high school—though not all of them were in high school—who admitted to me that they had had sex experiences with boys, only about 25 became pregnant. . . . The others avoided pregnancy, some by luck, others because they had a knowledge of more or less effective contraceptive methods—a knowledge, by the way, which I find to be more common among them than is generally supposed." (P. 64).

Spinsters use these devices so that their freedom is not marred, married women use them so that they are not encumbered with the responsibility of rearing children, so that they can divorce their husbands any time they like. Women in general use them because they have begun to abhor the very idea of motherhood, because they are prevented from enjoying life fully, and because they think their physical charm is ruined after bearing children.[1]

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1. Mcfadden, *Manhood and Marriage*, p. 82.

Motives may be any, but the fact is that in 95 per cent of cases natural consequences of man and woman's sexual relation are stopped by anti-conceptionist devices. As regards the remaining 5 per cent cases, conception takes place just by chance and to counteract it one can freely resort to abortion, or even destroy the offsping. According to Judge Lindsey, at least 15,00,000 abortions are performed annually in America, and thousands of babies are disposed of for good as soon as they see the light of the day.[1] (P. 118).

The Case of England

I do not wish to dwell on these unpleasant details any longer, but it would not be proper to end this part of the discussion without reproducing a few excerpts from George Ryley Scott's "*A History of Prostitution*".[2] This author, being an Englishman, has mostly dealt with the moral state of his own country. He says:

> "In addition to the women who are entirely dependent for their bread and butter on their earnings from the hire of their bodies, there are large and ever-increasing numbers who have other means of earning part or all of their livelihood, and who indulge in promiscuous sexual intercourse as a means of supplementing their incomes. These are prostitutes in all but name. And for the purposes of this work they may be aptly described as amateur prostitutes. (P. 131)

> "But, paradoxically as it may seem, there are far more amateur prostitutes today than there ever were before. They exist in every strata of society, and the fact that these girls would burst into hot anger at the mere suggestion that they were, prostituting their bodies, does not alter the fact that they are, in everythin g except name morally indistinguishable from the most brazen harlot of Piccadilly.... It must be remembered that it is now fashionable for adolescent girls to

1. According to Dr. Jacobziner, Assistant Commissioner of the New York City Department of Health, "Of all the maternal deaths in N.Y. City in 1962, over 50 p.c. resulted from criminal abortions". (*Reader's Digest*, March, 1964, p. 135)—Tr.

2. George Ryley Scott, *A History of Prostitution : From Antiquity to the Present Day*, published by T. Werner Laurie, London, 1940.

be sophisticated, daring, and even vulgar; just as it is fashionable for them to smoke cigarettes, to drink cocktails, to use lipstick, to avow knowledge of sex and birth control, to discuss obscene literature. . . . Thus girls, in ever-increasing numbers, are indulging in sexual intercourse before marriage; so much so, in fact, that the girl who goes to the altar a virgin in any true sense of the word is becoming a rarity." (Pp. 132-134).

Then the author analyses the causes which have worked to bring things to such a pass. Let us have the analysis in his own words:

> "In the first place the desire for smarter clothes and accoutrements has a lot to do with it. Anyone who cares to use his eyes can see, in every city, working girls by the hundred who are dressed in clothes they could not possibly afford if they were dependent solely on their wages. The saying that "men buy their clothes" is as true today as it was a quarter of a century ago. The clothes which the girls wear and which the men buy for them are better and smarter—that's the only difference. Then the emancipation of woman, with the concomitant tremendous increase in their freedom, has had a lot to do with it. The decline of parental control over so many young girls has been so great in the past few years that one can justifiably say the girl of today enjoys a greater degree of freedom from parental restriction or regulation than did the young man of the same age a couple of decades ago." (P. 132)

"Another factor is the entry of women, in such overwhelming numbers, into the business world and into the profession in competition with men. This has led to an increase in the promiscuity of women, a lowered standard of morals generally, and a decrease in the resistance offered to man's erotic advances. It has led to all these things in two different ways. Before woman's emancipation, as was evident from the inquiry in a preceding chapter, into the reasons for women taking to prostitution as a profession, a girl in any but the peasant class had one profession open to her, and one only, that of marriage. Her whole aim in life was to make a good match ; in other words, to find a man who would

provide her with a home for life. For this reason she prized her virginity as she prized a rare and expensive jewel. And it was this very prize which she everlastingly dangled in front of man. Today marriage is no longer the big and important thing it was. True, most normal girls look upon a successful marriage as the culmination of their careers, but they no longer are obsessed with the urgency and necessity of it, they no longer spend all their walking hours in the rigorous pursuit of it. To the contrary, in most cases, they defer any serious contemplation of marriage until they have had that "good time" which now-a-days is on every girl's lips, as at one time it was on every man's. All of which means that, while matrimony is relegated to the shadowy future, sex adventure looms up more importantly than ever. Virginity is laughed at as something terribly old-fashioned.[1] So much so that those who stress its importance are in danger of being accused of worse practices than normal sexual promiscuity. The modern girl's credo is to drink her fill of enjoyment while she is young. To this end she frequents dance-halls, night clubs, restaurants, drinking saloons; she goes joy-rides with young men whom she scarcely knows from Adam. In other words, she puts herself deliberately and repeatedly into environments and circumstances designed to induce and to develop sexual excitement; and she indulges increasingly in promiscuous intercourse as the inevitable aftermath.[2]

(Pp. 134-136).

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1. Ironically enough, today it is the incipient professional prostitute and her client, also pimps and procurers, who attach value to the possession of virginity.

2. The recent sex-and-security scandal involving British War Minister John Profumo will not be forgotten for a long time. Brief excerpts from the statements of responsible people will show how violently it rocked Britain and caused serious shake-up in the administration of the country :

Mr. Harold Macmillan, the British Prime Minister, said what had happened had inflicted on him as head of administration "a deep and bitter and lasting wound." (APA/Reuter).

Mr. Harold Wilson, the Opposition Labour Leader, said: "It took the lid off one corner of the London underworld —vice and dope, blackmail and counter-blackmail, violence and petty crime . . . There is something utterly nauseating about a system of society which pays a harlot 25 times as much as it

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pays its Prime Minister, 250 times as it pays Members of Parliament, and 500 times as much as it pays some of its ministers of religion".

Assistant British Prime Minister R. A. Butler said: "That never in his 35 years in politics had he seen anything like the Profumo scandal . . ." (AFP)

Mr. James Callagham, M.P., said: "It is a reflection on our sense of values that in our own newspapers it has been Christine Keeler on the front page, and in the Russian Papers it has been Valentina Tereshkova."

It was predicted by certain sections of the British Press that "Dr. Ward would bring to surface not only most squalid aspects of Profumo affair but also new scandals involving some notable political personalities'.

Despite all this, " . . . there was a rush of British teen-agers (at a hair-dressing saloon) seeking hairdos that would make them look like call girl Christine Keeler . . ." (UPI)

Besides this, a press report said : "Crime in Britain is booming . . . The number of indictable offences last year reached a record 8,96,484. This was a rise of 71 per cent over 1961 . . . . More youngsters were in trouble. The number of juveniles convicted of indictable offences went up by 2 per cent in the first nine months of 1962". (PPA)

Author Peter Howard in his latest book, *Britain and the Beast*, said : Britain has "sold our moral birth right for a mess of materialism and offered as a cure the purging of "relative standards of morality that confuse and compromise our life for absolute standards to which there are no compromises". . . . He denounced British pacifist Earl Russell for being a "Grandpa Moses of materialism in his lifetime". (UPI)—Tr.

CHAPTER 7

The Decisive Question

THE people who oppose Purdah in our country and in the other Eastern countries have a somewhat similar concept of life in their minds. Its outward glare has dazzled them, and its immoral principles, material gains and sensual pleasures have overwhelmed them. They abhor Purdah because the ethics underlying it is radically opposed to the Western ethics which they have accepted blindly. Moreover, it prevents them from seeking and enjoying those pleasures of life for which they have developed a craze. Now the question is: Are these people prepared to face the dark side of this system of life and its practical consequences also? Opinion seems to be divided on this point.

One section of the people fully understand the possible consequences and seem prepared to face them. They in fact look upon these consequences as reflecting the bright, and not the dark, side of the Western way of life.

The other section, contrary to the former, look with grave concern upon these consequences and do not feel disposed to face them. But these peoples have become so enamoured of the material gains accruing from the Western way of life that they cannot easily ignore it altogether.

There is a third section of the people who neither understand the underlying concepts nor seem to be aware of the consequences thereof. They do not feel even the necessity to understand the causal relationship between the concepts and their results. Their only concern seems to be to go on following blindly the current trends of the world.

These three sections are so mixed up together that it is often difficult to distinguish the people one is speaking to. This confusion is sometimes highly misleading. It is, therefore, necessary that the

three sections be clearly distinguished one from the others and dealt with separately.

The Oriental "Occidentals"

The first section has intellectually accepted the philosophy, moral concepts and social principles on which Western civilization and culture are based. They consider life and its problems from the same viewpoint as was adopted by the architects of modern Europe, and now they want to mould the social pattern of their respective homelands also after the same Western pattern. They sincerely believe that the real aim of education for the woman is to enable her to earn her living and to acquire the arts of appearing attractive to the male. Her real position in the family according to them is that like the man she should also be an earning member so as to subscribe fully her share to the common family budget. They think that woman is meant to add charm and sweetness to community life by her beauty, elegance and attractive manners. She should warm up people by her sweet musical words, she should send them to ecstasy by her rhythmic movements, and she should dance them to the highest pitch of pleasure and excitement. They think that the woman's role in national life consists in doing social work, attending municipal councils, participating in conferences and congresses, and devoting her time and abilities to tackle political, cultural and social problems. She sould take part in physical exercises and sports, compete in swimming, jumping and race contests, and set new records in long distance flights. In short, she should do anything and everything outside the house, and concern herself less with what is inside the house. This is their ideal for womanhood. It leads to worldly prosperity and all the moral concepts that run counter to it are devoid of sense and meaningless. To suit the purposes of the new life, therefore, these people have changed the old moral concepts with the new ones, just as Europe did. For them material gains and sensual pleasures are of real worth, whereas the sense of honour, chastity, moral purity, matrimonial loyalty, undefiled lineage, and the like virtues, are not only worthless but antiquated whims which must be destroyed for the sake of making progress.

These people are indeed true followers of the Western creed. They are now trying their utmost to spread and propagate it in the Eastern countries also by the same techniques and devices as have already been adopted in the West.

Modern Urdu Literature

Let us first take literature which is by and large the most powerful factor of moulding people's minds. Every effort is being made through this so-called literature to present the new moral philosophy before the new generations in as attractive a manner as possible with a view to uprooting the old moral values even from the reader's subconscious. To illustrate this I shall reproduce below a few extracts from the modern Urdu literature.

In a famous Monthly which is held in high esteem in the literary circles of the country, an article entitled "Shirin's Lesson" has been published. The writer is a man of high education, is quite well-known and well-placed in the Government. The theme of the article is as follows:

A young girl is sitting before her teacher, learning her lesson. During the lesson she brings out a love-letter from her boy friend for the teacher's perusal and advice. She had chanced upon this friend in a "tea party" where "a lady had kindly introduced him to her". Since then they had been meeting and exchanging correspondence between them. Now the girl wants the teacher's help and guidance to write "a courteous reply" to the love-letter. The teacher tries to bring her attention back to the lesson, but the girl says:

> "I do want to study but those things only which help me to realise my dreams, not those which render me old too soon !"
> The teacher asks, "Do you have other friends also ?" And the pupil says, "I have, but this friend has a special manner of snubbing which is simply fascinating".
> The teacher says, "How will you feel if your father comes to know of this correspondence ?"
> The girl retorts, "Might not father also have written such letters in his youth ? He is fashionable, maybe he still writes. God forbid, he is not yet old".

The teacher says, "Fifty years back nobody could even think of writing a love-letter to a lady".

The gril exclaims, "Did people in those days love low-born women only? How fortunate then must have been the low-born and how roguish the nobility of those days!"

The last words of Shirin indicate the "high moral" drawn by the author:

"We young people have a double responsibilty to shoulder. We have to revive the moments of joy and bliss lost by our elders, and we have to bury deep the habits of lying and anger that still persist".

In another famous literary magazine, a short story entitled "Remorse" was published a year and a half ago. The theme ran thus:

An unmarried daughter of a respectable family falls in love with a young man. She invites him home in the absence of her father and without her mother's knowledge. Their relationship results in the natural consequence. The girl quietly argues to justify her sinful act:

"Why am I worried? Why does my heart throb? . . . Is it the prick of conscience that makes me uneasy? Am I ashamed of my act? Perhaps yes! But the event of that romantic moon-lit night is writ with gold in the book of my life. I still hold precious the memory of those blissful moments of ecstasy. Am I not prepared and willing to sacrifice my all in order to recapture those moments ?

"Why then does my heart throb? Is it due to the sense of guilt ? Did I commit a sin ? No, I didn't. Whom did I sin against ? I only made a sacrifice, a sacrifice for him! I wish I could make more sacrifices for him ! I am not afraid of sin, but I am surely afraid of this cruel society. How suspiciously and distrustfully it looks at me . . .

"But why am I afraid of this wretched society? . . Perhaps on account of my sin ? But what is my sin ? Will not any other girl have done the same as I did ? . . . That romantic night and that solitude ! How handsome he looked ! How he planted his lips upon mine, pulled me unto him, pressed me ! How I

surrendered myself into his warm scented embrace! I denounced the whole world and sacrificed my all to the few moments of pleasure. What happened then? What would any other couple have done? Would any woman have rejected him at that moment?

"Sin?—I have not sinned. I am not penitent. I am prepared to do the same again . . . Chastity?—What is chastity? Is it virginity or the purity of ideas? I am no longer virgin, but have I lost my chastity ? . . .

"Let the inhuman, cruel society do whatever it pleases. It cannot harm me. Why should I feel small at its foolishly suspicious looks? Why should I turn pale and fear its whispers? Why should I hide my face in shame at its meaningless, satirical remarks? I have a clear conscience, I am guiltless. Then why should I have a guilty conscience? Why shouldn't I publicly declare that whatever I did, I'm proud of it !"

This is the argument and way of thinking which the modern Urdu writer wants every girl—perhaps his own sister and daughter also—to learn. He seems to suggest that a young girl should readily surrender herself into anybody's warm embrace on a moon-lit night, for that is the only alternative for her in such a situation. Any woman who is thus caught cannot act otherwise. This is no sin, it is a sacrifice, and it does not harm one's chastity. How can chastity be harmed if one willingly sacrifices one's virginity keeping intact the purity of thought? It rather glorifies chastity, and it is an act which should be written in gold in a woman's life history. As regards society it is diabolic and wicked, because it looks upon chaste ladies with suspicion. The society is to blame for distrusting such selfless girls, and not the girl who does not mind being pressed in an open embrace on a moon-lit night. A cruel society which regards such a noble act as bad does not deserve any respect; it does not deserve to be feared by the one who performs such a charitable act. Nay, every girl should publicly and fearlessly perform such 'highly moral acts' and should try to put society, instead, to shame.

Such bold shamefacedness was never expected even of the prostitutes. These wretched souls in fact were never acquainted with the moral philosophy that could turn evil into good and good into evil.

The prostitute would sell her body but with a sense of guilt and sin. But the new literature wants every girl in every home to outstrip even the prostitute by means of the new moral philosophy which it is propagating to support obscenity and sexual lawlessness.

In another magazine which is quite popular in our literary circles, a short story, entitled "The Brother-in-law", has been published. The writer's father was a man who had earned distinction for producing the best moral literature in Urdu for the womenfolk of the Indo-Pak subcontinent, and was highly esteemed by them as a favourite author.—In this short story the young writer has taken pains to present the character of a young girl, as a model for her sisters, who even before her marriage used to get "excited" merely by imagining "the youthful charms and passionate behaviour of her finance's younger brother". This girl, while still unmarried, firmly held the view that 'youth that passes calmly and quietly does not differ much from old age. Youth must be riotous, it must grow exuberant by drawing inspiration from the conflict between love and beauty." With such notions she was married, and when she saw her bearded husband "she felt emotionally shocked". At this, according to plan, she made up her mind to pay particular attention to the "brother-in-law". For this an opportunity soon came her way. The husband left for England for higher studies, and in his absence abroad, the wife and the "brother-in-law" passionately enjoyed each other to their hearts' content. The details of their promiscuous indulgence are written by the wife herself to one of her unmarried girl friends in a note in which she describes fully her experiences through all stages till the culmination of her sexual relation with her love. Her description is so complete that no feeling and no experience of the sexual act has been left unrecorded. Only she has not painted a wordpicture of the actual union, which has been left to the reader's imagination.

If this literature is compared with the French literature extracts from which have been reproduced in the foregoing pages, it will be seen that it is heading for the same destination. It is preparing our people mentally and morally for the same system of life, with particular attention to the womenfolk, so as to destroy all sense of modesty and honour even from their subconscious.

Modern Civilization

This moral philosophy and concept of life is not working alone, it is being reinforced by the capitalistic system and the Western domocracy. All these forces are operating together to produce the pattern of life that has already been established in the West. Highly obscene literature on sex is being published which is freely falling in the hands of the male and the female students. Nude pictures and photographs of ignoble women are printed in newspapers and journals and pasted on the walls of every house and every shop. Gramophone records containing cheap, filthy songs are being played in every house and every street. The whole business of cinema is run by playing upon base emotions, and by presenting on the screen every evening highly obscene and immoral scenes which so much fascinate the young boys and girls that they take actors and actresses as models for imitation. After witnessing such exciting performances in the cinema halls the young people passionately set about looking for opportunities of love-making and romance. Due to the capitalistic devices to make money, conditions in the big cities are rapidly changing and it is becoming more and more pressing for women also to earn their living with the result that the need of propaganda for contraceptive drugs and devices is becoming all the more necessary.

The modern democratic system whose so-called blessings have reached the Eastern countries also, mainly through England and France, has on the one hand opened new avenues for women of participating in political and social activities, and on the other, it has established institutions that have created countless opportunities for the free intermingling of the sexes. Besides, it has rendered law so flexible that in most cases expression of obscenity, even the practical commission of sin, is not held as a crime.

Lives of the people who have intellectually adopted this way of life have been almost wholly revolutionized in so far as moral, and social aspects of life are concerned. The dress their women are wearing is such that they can easily be mistaken for film actresses. They have given up modesty. Their semi-nude attire, their fondness for showy colours, and their keenness for make-up reveal that they have no other object before them than to become sex magnets. They

have become so immodest that now it is no more a matter of shame for them to bathe along with men in bathing-costumes and get themselves photographed for newspapers. This is now no question of shame for according to modern concepts of morality no part of the human body is private. If the palm of the hand and the sole of the foot can be displayed, what harm is there in uncovering the thighs and the breasts? Hedonism that manifests itself in "art" is above morality and has a moral criterion of its own. It is on this account that fathers and brothers feel delighted when they see their young daughters and sisters give musical and dancing performances on the stage and win applause from excited audiences of hundreds and thousands. Material success which for these people is the sole object of life is more valuable than anything else in the world. A girl who has acquired this object and has mastered the art of winning popularity in society has attained great success in life, though she may have lost her chastity. That is why these people cannot understand why a young girl's studying along with boys in a school or college, or her going to Europe by herself for studies be held as objectionable.

What Do the "Occidentals" Say ?

These are the people who mostly object to Purdah. They look upon Purdah as something detestable, to be straightaway rejected. They think that ridiculing Purdah and talking of it in a disparaging manner is enough to refute the argument supporting it. But this attitude is similar to the attitude of a person who does not recognize the necessity of the nose on the human face, and who therefore starts ridiculing every person whom he finds having a nose on his face. Such an attitude can impress ignorant people only. These people, if they have any sense, should realize that the values they recognize differ radically from the values we cherish. Things that we value, have no value for them. As a result, the way of life that we cherish according to our standards of values should be absolutely worthless from their point of view. But in the presence of such basic differences only a foolish person would disregard the real issue and choose to attack the side-issues. The only criterion that can help determine human values are the Laws of Nature. A value which

according to these Laws satisfies the demands of human nature and leads man to real success and well-being will be the real value worthy of our regard. Let us, therefore, judge our respective values against this criterion and see who is in the right. Let us present our respective arguments and decide impartially and rationally which arguments are weightier. Thus, if we prove our set of values to be of real standard, people may accept them as rationally and scientifically founded, or they may continue to follow those values which they have adopted solely on account of base motives. In this case, however, they will soon realize that their own position has become ridiculous.

The "Lip-Service" Muslims

The first section comprises the non-Muslims and the so-called Muslims only, but this section consists wholly of the professed Muslims. Women of these people neither observe full Purdah nor are wholly unveiled. Their behaviour is illustrative of the mentality of "the irresolute people who neither follow this way nor that. . ." On the one hand, these people claim to cherish the Islamic standards of morality, culture and nobility of character. They want their women to be chaste and modest, and their homes free from immorality. They are also not prepared to face the consequences that should naturally follow from the principles of Western civilization and pattern of life. But, on the other hand, they are violating the principles of the Islamic way of life and taking their wives, sisters and daughters, though hesitatingly, on the way of Western civilization. These people in fact, are harbouring the mosconception that by combining half-Western and half-Islamic ways they will be gaining the advantages of both the civilizations. In other words, they will be able to preserve Islamic morals in their homes, keep intact the family discipline, and at the same time, benefit by the charms and pleasures and material gains of the Western way of life also, remaining immune from its abuses. But this attitude is irrational in more than one way. In the first place, it is wrong to graft together mutilated parts of two civilizations which are diametrically opposed to each other in ideals and structure, for such an unnatural combination is more likely to gather the demerits of

both rather than their merits. Secondly, it is equally wrong to allow relaxation in the sound moral principles of Islam, give people the habit of violating the law, and then try to stop them within the "harmless" bounds. The prevalence of semi-nude dresses and craze for beautification, the initiation ceremonies and the increasing interest in the cinema, nude pictures and love romances, and the education of girls on the Western pattern may not entail immediate consequences; these may not even seem to harm the present generation. But cherishing the hope that the future generation also will remain immune from their evil effects is a grave folly. All wrong customs have an innocent beginning in the community life. But as they are handed down by one generation to the other they assume unusual dimensions. Even in Europe and America, consequences of the reorganization of community life on wrong bases did not appear forthwith; they have fully appeared now after three or four generations. Therefore, the blend of the Western and Islamic ways and observance of the so-called Purdah is no solution at all. It indeed reflects a strong inclination towards extreme Westernism. People who are treading this path should clearly understand that the beginning they have made may not bring them to grief, but it will surely lead their children or the children of their children to grave consequences.

The Decisive Question

In a situation as this, these people should pause for a while and consider as best as they can the following basic question: Are they prepared to face the natural and logical consequences of the Western way of life which have already appeared in Europe and America? Do they really want: that their social environment also should be charged with sexual and emotional excitements? that their nation also should abound in immodesty, corruption and sexual promiscuity? that venereal diseases should thrive and family system be disrupted? that divorces and separations should become common? that men and women should freely indulge in the gratification of their sexual desires? that new generation should be prevented by contraceptive devices, abortion and genocide? that young boys and girls should dissipate their energies and ruin their health? that young children

should develop sexual appetite prematurely, and that their mental and physical growth should be hampered in the very beginning?

If they are prepared to face all this only for the sake of material gain and sensual pleasures, they may freely follow the Western way and leave Islam alone. But before they go the Western way they will have to declare their desertion of Islam so that they may no longer use it to deceive people and their misdeeds do not reflect on Islam and the Muslims.

But if they are not prepared to face these consequences, if they want to have a clean and pure community life, they should not even look towards the Western way. For the Western way leads just to the opposite direction and cannot take them to the desired goal. Indeed it is only Islam which can provide wholesome atmosphere for the development of high morals and noble traits of character, which can guarantee true progress of man's intellectual, spiritual and physical abilities. Again it is the Islamic atmosphere alone in which men and women can perform their social functions to the best of their ability, uninterrupted by the lusts of the flesh, in which family system, the corner-stone of civilization, can be firmly established, in which lineage can remain pure and uncorrupted, in which the family life can be a source of peace and comfort for man, a cradle of educational training for his offspring and an association for co-operative action for all the members of the family. If they really cherish these objectives, they should sincerely follow the way of Islam.

But before they choose the way of Islam they will have to give up all desire for material gains and sensual pleasures that has been created by the fascinations of the Western civilization; they will have to cleanse their mind of all those concepts and ideas that they have borrowed from Europe; and they will have to cast off all those principles and ideals that they have imbibed from the Western culture and way of life. Islam has its own principles and ideals and its own social concepts in accordance with which it has built its own system of life. It protects and safeguards this system by a specific discipline that has been devised with utmost wisdom and with full consideration for human psychology. It is no Utopia like Plato's Republic. It has stood the test of time through more than thirteen and a half centuries. During this long period its

impact has not produced even one-tenth of the evils and abuses that have been caused by the Western civilization during a century or so. Therefore, if they want to benefit by this strong and tried out system of life, they will have to abide fully by the discipline that it brings. Then they will not be allowed the choice to transplant in it half-baked, untested ways which are the product of their own thought or have been borrowed from others and are wholly opposed to it in content and spirit.

As for the third section, it consists of the foolish and thoughtless people who cannot think and form independent opinion. These people do not deserve attention and may, therefore, be ignored.

CHAPTER 8

Laws of Nature

I

NATURE has created man, like all other species, as male and female, each possessing a strong natural urge for the other. The study of other animal species has shown that their division into male and female and the natural urge in them for the opposite sex is confined to the propagation of the particular species only. That is why their sexual urge is just proportionate to requirements to that end. Moreover, this urge has been so controlled in them instinctively that they never transgress sexually the limits set for their nature. Contrary to this, man has been endowed with this urge in a liberal, unparalleled measure, knowing no discipline whatever. Man knows no restriction of time and clime and there is no discipline that may control him sexually. Man and woman have a perpetual appeal for each other. They have been endowed with a powerful urge for sexual love, with an unlimited capacity to attract and be attracted sexually. Their physical constitution, its proportions and shape, its complexion, even its contiguity and touch, have a strange spell for the opposite sex. Their voice, their gait, their manner and appearance, each has a magnetic power. On top of that, the world around them abounds in factors that perpetually arouse their sexual impulse and make one inclined to the other. The soft murmuring breeze, the running water, the natural hues of vegetation, the sweet smell of flowers, the chirping of birds, the dark clouds, the charms of the moon-lit night, in short, all the beauties and all the graces of nature, stimulate directly or indirectly the sexual urge between the male and female.

Then if we examine the physical system of man we shall find that nature has reserved in it a great store of energy which is at once the source of vitality for life, for action and for sexual coitus. The same glands which provide hormones for his limbs and activate them

also produce for him sexual energy. Moreover, they develop in him the impulse to utilize this energy, lend special charm, elegance and grace to his body to excite this impulse, and furnish his eyes, his ears and his senses of smell and touch, even his imagination, with the quality of being stimulated and allured by these enchantments.

The same endowments of nature can be seen at work in the psychic life of man. All his mental forces seem to be governed by two main urges of his self : the urge for self-preservation, and the urge for establishing relationship with the opposite sex. In youth when the practical powers of man are at their zenith, the latter urge, being the stronger one, generally dominates the former. Sometimes it so overwhelms man that he would be prepared even to lay down his very life in order to satisfy it.

Role of Sex Appeal in Civilization

The question arises : What is all this for? Is it merely for the propagation of the species?—No, for the human species has not to depend on sexual intercourse as much for its propagation as fish and goats and other animals do. Why then has nature endowed man with an extraordinary inclination to sex and also provided around him means which arouse and excite it continually? Has this all been arranged for the pleasure and enjoyment of man?—No, not even that. Nature has nowhere made pleasure and enjoyment as an end in itself. It has always had some higher and nobler end in view for the achievement of which it impels man and animal to strive from within. Pleasure and enjoyment are there, but these in fact serve as an allurement so that effort is made earnestly and with devotion. Let us then consider what is that noble object before nature in this regard. The more one thinks the more will one be convinced that nature intends to make the human race, unlike other species, a civilized race used to community life.

That is why the heart of man has been infused with an unusual urge for sexual love and attachment which demands not only physical union and mating but also an enduring and sincere spiritual fellowship. That is why man has been endowed with sexual inclination in a degree greater than what is requisite for the purpose of

mating. The sexual urge and appeal in him is so great that if he begins to gratify it in the sexual act even in the ratio of 1: 10, he will soon ruin his health and exhaust his energies prematurely. This is a clear indication of the design of nature that the great measure in which sexual urge and appeal has been placed in man is not meant to enable him to perform the sexual act more often than animals, but it is meant to unite man and woman in a lifelong companionship.

That is why woman has been endowed, besides sexual desire and appeal, with modesty, resistance and escape more or less generally. This quality of resistance and escape is found in the females of other species too; but in the human female it is stronger and keener by far and it has been rendered all the more intense by the feminine sense of modesty. This also shows that the real object of sex magnetism in man is to secure permanent companionship between man and woman, and not that every sexual impulse in them is meant to lead to and culminate in a sexual act.

That is why the human child has been created the tenderest and weakest of all young ones in the animal kingdom. The human baby, unlike the young ones of other species, has to depend on its parents for protection and upbringing for quite some years, and it takes a considerably longer time to develop self-sustenance. This also implies that the relationship between man and woman should not only be of a sexual nature, but as a consequence of this relationship they should develop mutual regard and co-operation in the wider sphere of life.

That is why love of offspring is strongest in man. Animals nurse their young ones for a brief period only, and then break all relations of love and blood with them, so much so that they do not even recognize each other. Contrary to this, man remains emotionally attached to his offspring even after its early stage of development. He transfers his love even to the offspring of his offspring, and in most cases it so overwhelms his selfish animality that he gladly sacrifices his personal desires to the desires of his children. He wishes from his innermost heart that he may provide the best possible means of life for them and leave behind the fruits of his labours for their comfort and enjoyment. The existence of this intense sentiment of love in the human heart clearly shows that nature

wants the sexual urge between man and woman to bind them in an enduring fellowship, to make this fellowship the basis for family life, to knit several families together by the love of blood relations, to lay foundation for co-operation and mutual dealings by common loves, and finally to create a society and system of community life.

Basic Problem of Civilization

This shows that the sexual desire that has been infused in each nerve-cell of the human body and soul for the motivation of which stimulants have been scattered throughout the world, aims at turning his egoism into collective channels. Nature has made this desire the chief motivating force for the purpose of establishing community life. It leads to companionship between the sexes, which in turn results in the social life of man on the earth.

It must by now have become clear that the problem of man and woman's mutual relationship is indeed the most fundamental problem of civilization, and on its right and rational solution depends the well-being, prosperity and stability, or otherwise, of man's community life on the earth. One kind of relationship between the sexes is of animal or purely sexual nature : its only object is the propagation of the race. The other relationship is the human one which aims at bringing the two sexes together for co-operation in attaining the common goals of life according to the inherent abilities of each. To secure this co-operation sexual love acts as a binding force between the male and the female ; and, thus, the animal and human factors not only impel man to work for the advancement and preservation of civilization but also to supply individuals to continue this function. Hence, the prosperity and stability, or otherwise, of civilization wholly depends on a balanced and proper co-ordination of the two elements.

Requirements of a Clean Community Life

Now let us examine and analyse the question : What is the right and rational proportion in which the animal and human elements in man and woman's relationship can be combined to create a pious and clean community life, and what are the disruptive factors which generally corrupt it?

Control of Sexual Urge

In this regard the foremost problem is how to keep a check on the sexual urge and appeal. As has been pointed out above, the urge for sex is strongest in man. Not only are the internal motives in man for sex stimulation very powerful but the world around him also abounds in all sorts of sex stimulants for him. This urge for the stimulation of which nature herself has extensively arranged did not indeed stand in need of further stimulation by him. But if man also starts devising means of promoting it by use of his ingenuity, and adopts a way of life in which the sexual appetite goes on increasing and to satisfy it facilities are also multiplied, it will surely transgress all limits. In such a case the human side of his nature will soon be dominated by his animal side, and his animality will eventually suppress both his humanity and civilization.

The sex relation along with each of its preliminaries and motives has been made pleasure-yielding by nature. But as has been pointed out above, the element of pleasure has been provided to allure man into the service of the real ideal, *viz.*, the creation of a civilized community life. On the contrary, if pursuit of pleasure becomes a craze with man it may result, as it always has resulted in the past, in his ruin. Historical and other evidence about nations which have met their downfall clearly shows that pursuit of the pleasures of the body among them had transgressed all limits. Their literature abounds in sensational themes; their concepts, their legends, their poetry, their paintings, their sculpture, their places of worship, their palaces, all bear evidence of the same trend. The nations which are heading for a similar catastrophe present a similar phenomenon. They may conceal sexual perversion under cover of art, romantic literature, aesthetics and such other fine and innocent labels, but reality does not change with the change of interpretation. After all, how is it that in modern society a woman feels more at home in the company of men than of women, and a man more at home in the company of women than of men? Why is the craze for make-up and beautification among men and women on the increase? Why, in the present-day mixed society, is the woman gradually

casting away her clothes and becoming more and more inclined to expose each part of her body before man who is becoming more and more crazy about female nudity? Why are nude pictures and images and semi-nude dances becoming more and more popular? How is it that a cinema picture is not appreciated unless it contains a love romance punctuated with dialogues and actions concomitant of sex relations? What do such affairs indicate if not sexuality and sex hunger? A civilization that abounds in such affairs and trends cannot but be destined to a tragic end.

In such an emotional and sexually charged environment it is inevitable that new generations become physically weak, their intellectual development be retarded, and their mental energies dissipated; it is inevitable that obscenity prevails, venereal diseases spread, movements for contraception, abortion and genocide thrive and men and women begin mating like animals. Such a sensual craze cannot but ruin all human civilization, even man himself eventually, and lead the people involved in it into such depths of moral depravity as may not allow them a second opportunity of rising again.

Similar will be the fate of the civilization which follows the other extreme. Just as dissipation of sexual energy is harmful, so is the tendency to curb and suppress it unduly. The civilization that leads man into retirement, towards celibacy and monasticism, fights against nature. But nature has never been defeated by any opponent ; it has rather crushed its opponents. Pure monasticism can never become the basis of a civilization; it is indeed the negation of civilized and community life. However, it is possible to create a civilization with a non-sexual atmosphere by inculcating monastic ideas in the minds, and by educating the people to look upon the sex relation as something base, despicable and filthy, keeping away from which may be a criterion of morality and curbing which by all possible means an act of piety. But curbing the sexual urge is in fact curbing humanity itself. If we suppress that urge we are suppressing along with it the intellectual as well as the practical power of man, his ability to reason and think, his courage and will-power, his valour and perseverance. Thus, the suppression of the sexual urge is tantamount to suppression of the intellectual

and physical powers of man. It is subduing and crushing all his capabilities leaving no hope of their regeneration, for the chief motivating force in man is his sexual power and ability.

Thus the primary function of a clean community life is to prevent the sexual urge from running wild, to moderate and regulate it in a system. The social system should, on the one hand, curb motives leading to abnormal and sensual tendencies. On the other, it should open ways for the satisfaction of the normal urges in accordance with the requirements of nature.

II

Founding the Family

Now the question arises : What are the objects and requirements of nature? Has man just been left in darkness in this regard so that whatever he lays his hands on blindly becomes the object of nature? Or has it been made possible for him to find out the real object of nature from its manifestations? Most people seem to hold the first view. That is why they do not heed the indications of nature even in passing, and declare whatever they please as the object of nature. That is, however, not the way of a seeker after truth. When he goes out in search of truth he takes but a few steps in the right direction and he finds nature itself pointing clearly by its manifestations to its own aims and objects.

We know that man has been created as male and female like the other species and endowed with sexual appeal which clearly aims at the propagation of the race. But that is not the only demand nature makes upon man; it also makes other demands. A little thinking will show what these other demands are and what is their specific nature.

The first thing is that the human baby, unlike the young ones of other species, needs much longer time and far more care and attention for its proper upbringing. Even if we consider it merely as an organism we shall find that it takes quite a number of years to develop the ability to satisfy its animal needs, like the acquisition of food and self-protection. During the first two or three years of its life it is so helpless that it constantly needs the care and attention of its mother for its very survival.

But man, though he may still be in the primitive stage, cannot be regarded as merely an animal. He must be civilized to some extent and used to some sort of community life. This naturally adds two more demands to the initial demand of bringing up the offspring : (*a*) making use of all available means of civilization for the proper development of the child, (*b*) bringing up the child in a manner and with a view to enabling it to carry on the functions and affairs of existing civilization and to replace the former workers.

Then, as the civilization goes on advancing, these two demands also go on becoming more and more heavy. On the one hand, the essential requirements necessary for the upbringing of children increase; on the other, civilization itself not only demands well trained and well educated workers for its survival but also it requires every new generation to excel its predecessor so that it may work for its growth and progress. In other words, it requires that every guardian should make an effort to enable his child to excel himself, an ideal demanding the extreme sacrifice of one's sentiment of self-regard!

Such are the demands of human nature, and their first addressee is the woman. The man meets the woman for a short while and then affords to desert her and escapes the consequences of that meeting for ever. But the woman cannot do so. She is bound more or less for life in consequence of the union. After conception has taken place, she cannot evade the consequences at least for a period of five years. If, however, she has to satisfy all the demands of civilization she will have to shoulder responsibilities of her short, pleasurable union with man for another fifteen years or so. The question is, how can one party alone be prepared to accept all the responsibility accruing from an act performed by two parties jointly? Unless a woman is freed from the fear of her co-partner's infidelity, unless she is ensured her child's proper upbringing, unless she is secured against the worry of procuring for herself the necessities of life, she cannot be persuaded to shoulder this heavy responsibility by herself. For a woman who has no protector and provider (قوام *Qavvam* in the Quranic language) pregnancy is an accident, a tragedy, a calamity getting rid of which will naturally become an urge

with her. Obviously, she cannot be prepared to welcome it.[1]

Thus if survival of the race and perpetuation and growth of civilization are important, the man who impregnates a woman must jointly shoulder the responsibility of the consequence with her. But selfish as he is by nature, he cannot be easily induced for the desired co-operation. In so far as the function of making the race survive is concerned, he accomplishes his part of it as soon as he has impregnated his female partner. After that, the whole burden of responsibility has to be borne by the female alone without any assistance from him. The sexual appeal also cannot force him to remain attached to the same woman. He may desert her and have relation with the second, and the third woman, and thus go on sowing his wild oats. So, if it is left to his choice, there is no reason why he should come forward willingly to shoulder the responsibility. Indeed, nothing can compel him to spend the fruits of his labour on that particular woman and her child. After all, why should he prefer this unshapely woman to another charming lady? Why should he bring up and maintain a useless lump of flesh and spend sleepless nights amidst its cries and suffer loss upon loss at the hands of this little devil who breaks things, spreads filth and heeds not?

Nature itself has solved this problem to some extent. It has endowed the female with a rare charm and sweetness of manner, with a supreme quality of making sacrifice in the way of love, so that she may enchant the male by breaking down his selfish egoism. It has also filled the child with a captivating force so that it may attract the hearts of its parents in spite of its highly annoying, destructive and foolish habits. But these factors by themselves are not strong enough to induce man to suffer losses, face troubles and make sacrifices for years together in the way of performing his

1. Dr. Van de Velde emphasizes the point as follows: 'The dependence of the woman on the man, and in consequence, his supremacy in marriage and in society, is based on biological and natural facts . . . But it is ridiculous to try, as is being done increasingly by certain people, to reverse the parts played in life, by man and woman. Society is bound to suffer from this, both men and women, and, in the end, women most of all. . . . If the primary processes of life, which are based on biological facts, are ignored time will have its revenge. . . . One cannot assault Nature with impunity". (*Sex Hostility in Marriage,* p. 78).

natural, moral and social duties. Then man is not wholly free to act as he likes ; he is being closely followed by his eternal enemy, the Devil, who is constantly trying to turn him away from the path of true nature by endless, ingenious devices and temptations cleverly designed to appeal to people of all ages and races.

It is the miracle of religion that it induces both man and woman to make sacrifices for the race and civilization by curbing their selfish animality and turning them into selfless human beings. Only the Prophets of God understood the real object of nature and devised marriage as the right form of relationship between man and woman for sexual as well as social purposes. It was under the influence of their teachings and guidance that marriage became an institution among all nations in all the four corners of the world. It was under the impact of the moral principles preached by them that man could gather enough spiritual strength to endure hardships and suffer losses in the way of serving humanity, whereas a child could have no greater enemy than its own parents. Again, it was the social discipline brought in by them that gave birth to the family system whose grip makes mere boys and girls co-operate with each other and understand their responsibility as husband and wife, otherwise the demands of their animal nature would be too vigorous to be prevented from indulging in free sexual gratification by the mere sense of moral responsibility without any external discipline. Sexual lust is an anti-social urge which tends to produce selfishness, egoism and anarchy. It lacks stability and sense of responsibility and urges man to temporary pleasure only. It is, therefore, no easy job to subdue it and press it into the service of community life, which demands patience and perseverance, devotion and sacrifice, constant toil and responsible behaviour. It is the law of marriage and family system alone which can tame this monster and turn it into an agent for lifelong co-operation between the husband and wife, and thus help in the building up of community life. Without it there can be no community life whatever. Man may start living like animals, and eventually the human race may cease to exist on the earth.

Thus, the way that nature wants to open for the satisfaction of man's natural urges, preventing at the same time his sexual urge from running wild, is of marriage between the man and the woman.

leading to the establishment of the family system. All the machinery that is required to run the great factory of civilization is produced in the small workshop of the family. As soon as boys and girls attain puberty, administrators of the workshop become anxious to pair them off as suitably as possible, so that their union may bring forth the best possible generation. Each child is looked after and bred with unusual care and sincerity by each worker in the workshop so as to mould it into as good a shape as possible. As soon as the child opens its eyes in the world it is provided with an atmosphere of love, protection and care within the family. Indeed, only the family circle can provide for it the people who not only love it but also desire from their innermost heart that it should attain a higher status in life than that of its birth. Only a mother and father in the world can cherish the desire that their child should excel them in all the possible ways. So they make unintentional, unconscious efforts to shape the next generation better than their own and thus pave the way for human progress. There can be no question of their being selfish in this regard as their only ambition is to see that their child is shaping well. That it should emerge as a successful, fine human being is the only reward they expect of their care and labour. How can one find such selfless and sincere worker outside the family workshop?—workers who would not only work without reward for the betterment of humanity but also would spare their time, forgo their comfort and spend their energy and capabilities in the service of mankind, who would sacrifice their all for the sake of the one who is going to benefit others, and who think their only reward is the consolation that they have provided good workers to others. Is there a holier, more exalted institution than this for humanity?[1]

In order that the human race may survive and civilization develop hundreds of thousands of such couples are needed every

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1. The part played by the mother in this regard has been beautifully summed up by Dr. Van de Velde. He says : "Maternity means to sacrifice oneself for the coming generation, and thus for others. It means to look after others, to think of others and to find one's own well-being, one's own happiness, only in the well-being and in the happiness of others". (*Sex Hostility in Marriage*, p. 88).—Tr.

year as may volunteer to shoulder the responsibilities of such a service, and marry with a view to establishing more and more workshops of this kind. The great factory of the world can continue to function and develop only if such volunteers continue coming forward to provide suitable workers for it. If new workers do not come forth, and the old workers are rendered useless by natural factors, useful men will become day by day rare and ultimately the whole gamut of life will cease to exist. Every man who is working in this factory has not only to go on working till his death but has also to provide men like himself who will fill the place vacated by him.[1]

If we consider marriage from this point of view we shall find that it is not only the only lawful way of satisfying the sexual desire but indeed it is also a social obligation. Therefore, the individual cannot reserve the right to marry or refuse to marry according to his own sweet will. A person who declines to marry without a good reason is disloyal to the community, its parasite and robber. Every man who has been born on the earth has benefited by former generations right from his birth to attaining maturity. He has been able to survive, develop and shape as a human being solely because of the institutions and traditions evolved by them. During this period he has all along been receiving but has given nothing. The community has spent all its resources and all its energies on developing his innate faculties in the hope that when he grows up he will repay the debt in cash and kind. Now if after attaining adulthood he demands for himself personal freedom and liberty of action and wants to satisfy his personal desires only, without accepting the responsibility entailed by his acts, he is in fact being disloyal and deceitful to the community. Every moment that he thus lives is being spent in perpetrating cruelty and injustice. If the community had sense it would regard this culprit, this black sheep of society as it regards thieves and robbers and forgers, and not as a gentleman

1. Dr. Grasset says; "In order to carry on his kind, man must not only produce children, but men; to this end, it is not enough for male and female to be united for a moment; they must, if they are to fulfil their duty to race, found a family, for outside the family it is impossible really to produce men". (*Towards Moral Bankruptcy*, pp. 330-31).—Tr.

or a respectable lady. Whether we wanted or not we have inherited the heritage bequeathed by former generations. Now we cannot be free to decide whether we should or should not fulfil the demands of the law of nature in accordance with which we have received this heritage; whether we should or should not bring forth a generation that may inherit all the wealth of human heritage and traditions; whether we should or should not rear and train individuals who may take our place as we were reared and trained for the purpose by others.

III

Prevention of Sexual Lawlessness

Besides providing the facility for marriage and founding the family, it is also necessary that people should be strictly prohibited from satisfying their sexual desire outside marriage. For without such a measure the object of nature, *viz.*, marriage leading to the founding of the family, cannot be fulfilled.

Like the former un-Godly people, perverted people of the modern times also look upon fornication as a natural act and regard marriage as an unnecessary innovation of civilization. They seem to think that just as nature has created every ewe for every ram and every bitch for every dog, so it has created every woman for every man. It is, therefore, perfectly natural that whenever one feels the urge, whenever one finds the opportunity, and whenever two members of the opposite sexes mutually agree, sexual intercourse should take place, just as it takes place between animals. But this is indeed an utterly wrong view of human nature. These people look upon man as a mere animal. So whenever they talk of nature they always mean the animal and not the human nature. The uncontrolled, unregulated sexual relation that they call natural, is perfectly so in the animal kingdom, but quite unnatural for man. It not only runs counter to human nature but in view of its ultimate consequences it also goes against man's animal nature. For the animality and the humanity of man are not two separate, independent traits of his character, but the two have to merge together to make up his personality. Indeed, these two sides of his character are so closely inter-linked that it is not possible to reject the demands of the one

without at the same time rejecting the demands of the other.

Fornication seems to fulfil at least the demands of man's animal nature, because the object of the propagation of the species is achieved simply by the sexual act, whether it is performed inside marriage or outside it. But, as pointed out above, this act not only harms the object of human nature but also of animal nature. Human nature requires the sexual relation to be firm and enduring, so that both the parents may bring up the child jointly, and the man may support not only the child but its mother as well for quite some time. For unless a man is certain that the child is his, he cannot be prepared to face troubles and make sacrifices in the way of bringing it up, nor can he suffer it to inherit him. Similarly, unless a woman is confident that the man who is impregnating her will willingly support her and her child she cannot be prepared to suffer the rigours of pregnancy. Moreover, unless both the mother and the father extend full co-operation in bringing up the child, it cannot possibly attain the moral, intellectual and social stature required to make it a useful citizen. If men and women do not fulfil these requirements of their human nature and begin meeting only temporarily like animals, they in fact are also refusing to fulfil the demand of their animal nature. For they do not aim at procreation during the sexual act but only at seeking the maximum pleasure and gratifying their sex desire which in itself is against the purposes of nature.

Finding their position weak, the un-Godly people of the modern age put forward another argument. They contend that if two members of society come together to enjoy each other for a while, the society is not harmed. Why should it then interfere with their affair? Of course, society has every right to interfere if one party commits violence or fraud against the other, or becomes a nuisance to the community. But when there is no such apprehension and the matter is confined only to the seeking of pleasure between two persons, society should have no jurisdiction over them. For if the private affairs of individuals be meddled with like that, personal freedom will be reduced to nullity.

This concept of personal freedom is one of the absurdities of the 18th and 19th centuries which lies exposed at the very first ray of knowledge and truth. A little thinking will show that the kind

of liberty being demanded for the individual cannot have any room in the community life. Those who ask for such liberty should go to the jungles and live there like animals. Human society consists in inter-linked, inter-dependent relationships between individuals who influence and are influenced by others. Due to this mutual relationship no act of man can be taken as purely private. Such an act which does not affect others and society as a whole cannot be imagined. Not to speak of the acts performed with the limbs, ideas lurking in the mind also affect our body and, through it, others. Every throb of our heart and every movement of our body has far-reaching effects, so far-reaching that we cannot possibly comprehend them all. How then can one say that a person's using one of his natural gifts freely does not affect anybody beyond himself, that nobody should meddle with his affairs and that he should have complete freedom of action? If I, for instance, cannot be allowed to move my stick in any manner I like, to move my feet and trespass anywhere I please, to drive my vehicle in any direction I choose, to heap up as much filth in my house as I wish, how can my sexual desire only be allowed to have its own way? If all other personal affairs of my life have to be governed by social discipline, why should my sexual urge only be exempted from the honour of being regulated in a discipline? How can I be set at liberty to use it in whatever way I please?

The argument that the pleasure sought by a man and a woman in a private place does not at all affect society is just childish. As a matter of fact, such an act not only harms the society to which they directly belong, but also it harms the whole of humanity. Its consequences do not remain confined to the present generation only they are transferred to future generations also. The social chain in which mankind is bound has not left any individual free from its hold in whatever he does or wherever he be. Whether behind closed doors or in the protection of walls, he is as much linked with society as in the market place or in company of others. When, therefore, he is busy squandering his sexual energy aimlessly for temporary pleasure in a secret place, he is in fact sowing the seeds of anarchy and disruption in society, depriving it of its rights, and harming it morally, materially and socially. In his selfishness he is

striking at the root of all those social institutions by which he benefited as a member of society, but has refused to support their maintenance and survival. All institutions from the municipality to the state, from the school to the military, from the factory to the centre of scientific research, have been established on the trust that every individual who is benefiting from them will contribute his due share for their survival and progress. But when this dishonest person used his sexual energy without any intention of procreating and bringing up children, he in fact in his personal way hit a blow at the root of this system. He broke the contract by which he was bound as a human being; and he tried to shift the burden of his responsibility on to the shoulders of others. He is no 'gentleman : he is a thief, a cheat, a robber. To allow him any concession is to commit a crime against the whole of mankind.

If we correctly understand the place of the individual in the community there will remain no doubt in our minds that each endowment of nature to us is not meant to be solely used and enjoyed by us personally, but it is a trust with us and we stand answerable for it to all humanity. If we destroy ourselves or any of our natural gifts, or abuse them it is not destroying or abusing something of our own; it is rather destroying the trust and harming mankind as a whole. Our very existence in the world is a clear proof of the fact that others went through hardships and shouldered responsibilities to transfer life to us; and that is how we came into this world. Then the state provided us the security of life, health department protected us against disease, hundreds of thousands of people persevered day and night to provide us with the necessities of life, all the social institutions endeavoured to develop our natural gifts and educate them, thus making us what we now are. Shall we indeed be repaying all this justly if we harmed or abused that life or those gifts in the existence and development of which so many other people played a vital role? To commit suicide is forbidden on this very account. The masturbator has been condemned by the greatest of sages of the world for this very reason.[1] Homosexuality between the males has been declared a grave offence on this very ground.

"Accursed is the masturbator"—says a Tradition.

Likewise, fornication is not merely an individual's seeking pleasure and having a good time, but a crime against the whole of humanity.

The following, in short, are the social crimes that emanate from the commission of fornication:

First, a fornicator lays himself exposed to the danger of contracting venereal diseases, and thus not only reduces the social usefulness of his physical energies but also harms the interests of the human community and race. Every physician knows that the wound caused by gonorrhea rarely heals completely. A famous doctor has said : "Once gonorrhea, for ever gonorrhea". It affects the functioning of the liver, urine-bladder, and testicles, and causes rheumatism and other diseases. It may lead to barrenness permanently and is contagious. As to syphilis it is fully known that it poisons the whole body. From top to toe nothing remains immune from its infection. It not only destroys the physical energies of the patient himself but also it infects numberless other people too, through various means. So much so that it infects the children of the patient and the children of his children. The incidence of blindness, dumbness, deafness and weak-mindedness in children is mostly the fruit of a few moments of pleasure-seeking so madly craved for by a reckless, cruel father.

Second, every fornicator may not contract the venereal diseases but he cannot escape the vices that go with fornication. Shamelessness, deceit, lying, dishonesty, selfishness, self-indulgence, indiscipline, promiscuity of thought, sexual perversion and infidelity, these are the vices that afflict a fornicator. A person who develops these vices does not reflect them in his sex affairs only, but carries them along into all his dealings with society. And a society which abounds in people with such vices cannot prosper long. Its arts and literature, sports and entertainments, sciences and other branches of knowledge, industry and manual skills, ways of living and economy, politics and judiciary, military service and state administration, in short, all spheres of its life and activity must heavily suffer. In a democratic state especially each moral quality in the individuals must bring its effect to bear on the whole society. A nation the majority of whose people are temperamentally fickle and wanting in [illegible]ity, selflessness and self-control, cannot attain political

strength and stability.

Third, holding fornication as permissible clearly implies that prostitution should thrive uncurbed in society. A person who defends young men's right to "sexual freedom" is in fact suggesting that there must remain in society a fair number of such women as are morally depraved and down-trodden. But the question is, where will these women come from? Naturally from society, being daughters and sisters of the people themselves. Hundreds of thousands of such women each of whom could be the queen of a home, the founder of a family, the matron of several children, will have to be lodged in the brothels to serve as pressure-releasing places for promiscuous men, like the municipal urinals. They will have to be deprived of all qualities of feminine nobility; they will have to be trained as flirts; they will have to be educated and prepared to sell their loves, their hearts, their bodies, their beauty and charms, every moment to a new debauch; and thus they will have to rest content in being an instrument for the sexual indulgence of others throughout their lives, without serving any useful purpose.

Fourth, holding fornication as permissible inevitably harms the social aspect of marriage, ultimately resulting in the displacement of marriage by fornication. As a matter of fact, men and women who have a strong inclination for fornication are left with little ability to live an organized matrimonial life. For the vices of dishonesty, impurity of thought, sexual perversion and promiscuity that they develop and the fickleness of sentiment and lack of self-control that generally characterises them, are the very antithesis of the qualities required for establishing an abiding matrimonial relation. Even if they enter wedlock they cannot have that mutual regard and faith, that peace of mind and love, which is conducive to the rearing of a good generation and building up of a happy home. Moreover, it is practically impossible that the institution of marriage so essential for the community life will prosper in a place where facilities for fornication exist. For the people who enjoy all possible facilities for satisfying their sex desires without having to shoulder any responsibility thereof cannot be disposed to engage in the marriage bond and undertake the responsibilities it entails.

Fifth, if fornication be permitted, its prevalence will not only

strike at the root of the community life, but will tend to destroy the human race itself. As pointed out above, neither the man nor the woman can possibly render any service for the propagation of the race during their free sexual relationship.

Sixth, fornication can yield only illegitimate children for society and race. The distinction between legitimate and illegitimate lineage is not merely sentimental, as some people seem to think. To produce an illegitimate child is indeed a most heinous crime both against the child and civilization for more than one reason. In the first place, illegitimate impregnation takes place at a time when both the sinners are seized by a fit of purely animal passion. People who have illicit relations as a rule cannot be imagined as having the pure human feelings so naturally enjoyed by the married couple during their sexual intercourse. They come together and mate under the impulse of their animal passion, and are utterly devoid of human feelings at the time. Thus an illegitimate child can inherit only the animal qualities of its parents. Moreover, a child who is neither welcomed by its mother nor by its father, who has appeared as an unwanted, unpleasant thing between its parents, who cannot enjoy the love and resourcefulness of its father, whose only stay is the reluctant, disinterested attention given by the mother, and who does not enjoy the care and protection of the paternal and maternal near and dear ones, will inevitably grow up into an inferior, imperfect human being. Neither will he develop character and other qualities nor will he enjoy the worldly means of progress and advancement in life. Being inferior in status, resourceless, helpless and wretched, he is unlikely to become as useful a citizen as he would have been if he were legitimate.

Those people who favour free sexual relations put forward the plea for nationally controlled institutions for the upbringing and education of illegitimate children. They say that children produced by unmarried parents should be the responsibility of the state which should train them for the service of civilization. But by advancing such an argument these people in fact want to safeguard the freedom and individualist trends of the men and women, so that the objectives of procreating and bringing up of children are achieved without controlling and regulating their sex desires by the matrimonial

discipline. But, strange to say, the people who hold the individualism of the present generation so dear, propose a system of state-controlled education and training for the next generation that holds out no hope whatever of the development of individuality and growth of personality. In a system under which hundreds of thousands of children are bred and brought up together under one programme and in accordance with one scheme, children cannot possibly develop and unfold the individual traits of their personalities. On the contrary, they are more likely to develop maximum uniformity and superficial similarities. Children thus nurtured and trained will have almost identical personalities just like the steel machinery moulded at a big factory.[1] How debased and degraded is the conception about man held by these ignorant, foolish people! They want to turn out men like the Bata shoes. They perhaps do not realise that developing a child's personality is a delicate fine art which can satisfactorily be practised only in a small studio where each painting is the focus of the attention of each artist. The dignity and fineness of this art cannot possibly be maintained in a factory where wage-earners are required to produce identical paintings on a very large scale.[2]

Moreover, in such a system of national education and training one will necessarily need workers who can assume the responsibility of bringing up children on behalf of the society. Obviously, only such workers can be suitable for this purpose as can exercise self-control with regard to their own urges, who are themselves morally disciplined, otherwise they cannot be expected to inculcate moral

1. Bertrand Russell says : "There are, however, very grave dangers in the substitution of the state for the family. Parents as a rule, are fond of their children, and do not regard them merely as material for political schemes. The state cannot be expected to have this attitude. . . . Children handed over to the mercy of institutions will therefore tend to be alike". (*Marriage and Morals*, pp. 171-72)—Tr.

2. In the same book, Russell remarks: "The break-up of the family, if it comes about, will not be, to my mind, a matter for rejoicing. The affection of parents is important to children, and institutions, if they exist on a large scale, are sure to become very official and rather harsh. There will be a terrible degree of uniformity when the differentiating influence of different home environments is removed" (Pp. 240-41)—Tr.

discipline on the children. The question arises : where will such workers come from? The very object for which such a system of national education and training is proposed to be established is to afford men and women opportunities of freely satisfying their sex desires. Thus, when the very capacity among the people to exercise self-control and moral discipline has been destroyed, wherefrom can the society procure men who will instil moral discipline into the new generations?

Seventh, a selfish man who impregnates a woman by committing fornication, ruins her life for ever. Miserable and wretched, she stands condemned in the public eyes for the rest of her days. To remedy this the new moral principles suggest that all categories of motherhood, married and unmarried, should have equal status. It is said that motherhood anyway is worthy of respect. It is, therefore, inhuman on the part of society to condemn a girl who, in her simplicity or carelessness, accepted the responsibility of motherhood. But this is no remedy at all. It may help the prostitute, but for society it would be a curse, a misfortune. The contemptuous attitude of society towards an unmarried mother not only deters individuals from sinful and immoral acts but also it is an indication of the fact that the society is morally alive. If the married and the unmarried mothers are accorded equal status, it would imply that the society no longer distinguished between good and evil, right and wrong, sinful and righteous acts. Even if equal status was allowed, it would not remove the handicaps faced by the unmarried mother. One may regard the two categories of motherhood as of equal status, but nature does not grant such a view. Indeed they cannot be equal. It is against reason and logic, against justice and reality that they should be equal. How can a foolish woman who, under the momentary impulse of sexual excitement, surrendered herself to a selfish man who was not prepared to accept the responsibility of supporting her and her child, be regarded equal with a wise woman who kept her emotions in check until she got a noble, responsible man as her husband? One may get them the same status superficially, but one cannot provide that unthinking woman with the same sort of support and protection, sympathetic care and regard, peace of mind and love, as are so easily and naturally available

to a married woman. From where will one buy her child fatherly love and affection of the paternal relation? At the most one may get her a subsistence allowance under the law, but do a mother and her child need subsistence allowance only in this world? Thus the recognition of equal status for the married and the unmarried mothers may console the sinning mothers outwardly, but it cannot save them from the natural consequences of their folly; it cannot protect and safeguard the real interests of their children in the world.[1]

In view of these reasons, it is in the best interests of the survival and healthy growth of social life that indiscriminate indulgence in sexual liaison should be absolutely prohibited in society. There should be left only one way of satisfying the sex desire, *viz.*, through marriage. To permit individuals to indulge in illicit relationships is tantamount to committing a crime against society; it is rather an attempt to annihilate society. The society which lightly treats this matter and dismisses fornication between individuals as an ordinary affair., and is inclined to disregard the consequences of this sowing of wild oats by them is indeed an ignorant society. It is unaware of its rights; it is its own enemy. If it knew its rights and realized the repercussions of illicit sexual relations it would treat promiscuity as it treats acts of theft, robbery and murder. Fornication is indeed a more heinous crime than theft. A thief, a robber or a murderer at the most harms one or a few individuals only, but a fornicator commits robbery against the whole society, even against future generations. The effects of his crime are far greater and more far-reaching than those of other criminals. So when it is agreed that the interests of society must be safeguarded by the law against the selfish encroachments of the individual, and when, on the same grounds, theft, murder, robbery, forgery and such other acts of usurpation are held as punishable offences under the law, and thus their commission prevented, there is no reason why the law

1. Emphasizing the point, Dr. Van de Velde says: "I will merely state that, in my opinion, the problem, generally speaking, is insoluble, because, however greatly the social conditions of the unmarried mother and her children are improved, a woman will only rarely find adequate satisfaction for her natural and justifiable desires in such a position. (*Sex Hostility in Marriage*, p. 82).—Tr.

should not be made to protect society against fornication also and to hold it as a punishable offence.

As a matter of principle also, marriage and illicit relationships cannot co-exist in a social system. If people are allowed to satisfy their sexual desires without having to shoulder the responsibilities thereof, it is meaningless merely to force the marriage system upon society. It is just like holding a journey by railway without a ticket as permissible and at the same time establishing a system of purchasing the ticket for such a journey. No sensible person can follow both these ways at one and the same time. Obviously, either the ticket system should be abolished or, if it is to be retained, travelling without ticket should be regarded as an offence. Likewise, it is unreasonable to admit a dual policy with regard to marriage and illicit relationship. If the marriage system is essential for the proper growth of social life, as has already been established, it is also essential that fornication be held as an offence.[1]

Another characteristic of an un-Godly civilization is that it promptly grasps factors that yield limited, quick and concrete results, but it tends to overlook all those factors whose results are imperceptible because they are extensive and far-reaching. That is the reason why theft, murder and robbery are held as serious and fornication as trivial. The person who collects plague rats in his house, or

1. Some people have been misled into thinking that a young man should be allowed to have some opportunities of satisfying his sex desire before marriage, for it is difficult to control sex impulse in youth, and it cannot be curbed without impairing health. But the premises from which this inference has been drawn are invalid. The presence of irrepressible emotions indeed reflects the presence of an abnormal environment. Normal human beings become abnormal because a wrong social system excites them continually. Our cinemas and literature, our paintings and music, and the ever-present opportunities for men to intermingle with women in full make-up are the causes which under normal human beings sexually abnormal. In a peaceful and calm environment normal men and women cannot become so much sexually excited that they cannot hold in check their emotions by mental and moral training. Moreover, the argument that abstaining from the sexual act in youth impairs health and so fornication must be allowed to keep health, is based on a sheer misunderstanding. What is really necessary for the protection of health and morals is to change the ill-conceived system of life and the wrong standards of well-being and happiness under which marriage has become difficult and the illicit relationships easy.

spreads infectious diseases is not held pardonable by the un-Godly society, for his act seems to be clearly harmful. But, on the other hand, a fornicator who in his selfishness strikes at the very root of community life is held pardonable, for the results of his act are imperceptible, though inevitable. These people cannot understand why his act should at all be held as offensive. If the basis of community life be reason and knowledge of nature, instead of ignorance, no one can ever adopt such an irrational attitude towards life.

IV

Eradication of Indecencies

In order to prevent the commission of an act which is harmful for society it is not sufficient merely to declare it an offence punishable by law, but besides that, it is necessary to adopt the following four-point scheme also:

First, the mentality of the people should be so reformed by means of education that they begin to abhor the act and regard it as a sin, and their moral self prevents them from committing it.

Second, people should be so trained morally and public opinion so organized against the crime or sin, that they look upon it as a vicious and shameful act and regard the culprit with scorn and contempt, so that the individuals whose training has remained defective or who are morally weak may be deterred from committing it for fear of adverse public opinion.

Third, all such factors in the social life as abet or incite or compel people to do the wrong should be eradicated.

Fourth, social life should be so organized that it becomes really difficult for a person to commit a crime, even though he be inclined to commit it.

As for the soundness and necessity of this four-point scheme, this is supported by reason also. It is demanded by nature and the actual practice of the world confirms it. To prevent the commission of acts which are held as crimes by a society, this four-point scheme has more or less generally been adopted besides punishing the offences. Now if it is admitted that sexual licentiousness is fatal to community life and should be regarded as a heinous

crime against society, it should also be admitted that to prevent it, it is absolutely necessary that besides punishing it, the above-mentioned four-point reformative and preventive scheme should also be enforced. For this individuals should be trained, public opinion should be educated, sex stimulants should be eradicated from social life, all obstacles that make marriage difficult should be removed, and instead, such checks should be imposed on the relations between men and women that the inclination among them for illicit relations is curbed by strong social barriers. After fornication has been admitted as a crime and sin, no sensible person can utter a word of objection against this reformative scheme.

Some people concede all the moral and social principles on the basis of which fornication has been declared sinful. But they insist that to curb it only reformative devices should be employed instead of the penal and preventive measures. They say that by education and training people should be helped to develop an inner feeling, a powerful conscience, and a moral self so that they are prevented from within from committing this sin. If, on the contrary, penal and preventive measures were adopted instead of the reformative ones, it would mean that grown-up people were being treated like children, and thus humanity would be disgraced. We do concede that the best and most sensible way of reforming humanity is the one they suggest. Indeed the very object of culture is so to strengthen the people from within that they begin to respect the law of society, and their own conscience restrains them from violating the moral code. For this very purpose utmost attention is paid to the education and training of individuals. But the question is : Has culture succeeded in attaining its ends? Have human individuals really become so advanced culturally through education and moral training that their inner self can now be safely relied upon, and does human society no longer stand in need of penal and preventive measures for its protection? Leave the ancient times that are called the "dark ages". Consider for a while this twentieth century —this "age of enlightenment". Take the case of the most civilized countries of Europe and America where every individual is educated and every citizen cultured. Has the incidence of crime and violation of law in these countries been prevented by education and training

for the purification of self? Are not thefts and robberies and murders still being committed there? Have the cases of fraud and forgery, injustice and corruption, become non-existent there? Do these countries no longer stand in need of the police, courts of law, jails and censorship agencies? Have the citizens there become so responsible morally that they need no more be "treated like children"? If it is not so, if even in this age of enlightenment it has not become possible to leave matters of social discipline and order at the mercy of the moral sense of the individuals, if even today "humanity is being disgraced" everywhere by all sorts of punitive and preventive measures introduced to stop crime, how is it that people should feel disgraced with regard to punitive measures against illicit relations only? Why should they insist that in this regard only these "childish" people should be treated like the "grown-ups"? They may do well to search their hearts; maybe they themselves have a guilty conscience.

It is said that the factors which are being regarded as sex stimulants, and thus required to be eradicated from social life, are indeed the very soul of art and aesthetics. Their eradication, it is contended, will be tantamount to depriving human life of grace and beauty. Therefore, whatever reform is needed to improve man's social life and protect civilization should be so carried out that fine arts and aesthetics are not harmed. We do concede that art and aesthetics are valuable things which must be protected and made to flourish, but social life and the collective well-being of man are even more valuable. It cannot be sacrificed to any art, any aesthetic taste. If art and aesthetics have to prosper they should follow such a course for their development as may be in complete harmony with the collective life of man and his social well-being. The art and aesthetic taste that leads man to his ruin and downfall rather than to his happiness and well-being cannot be allowed to prosper in society. It is not a private and personal view of ours, it is the demand of both reason and nature. The whole world concedes this view in principle and it is being followed everywhere. Anything that is deemed as fatal to man's collective life or as likely to cause nuisance, is not tolerated anywhere merely for the sake of art and aesthetics. For instance, the literature that causes sedition and

chaos, and incites man to kill and plunder cannot be endured merely for its literary charms and merit. Similarly, the literature that induces people to spread cholera and plague is not tolerated anywhere. The cinema or theatre that urges people to break the law and rise in revolt cannot be permitted by any government to give public performance. The pictures that reflect feelings of injustice, iniquity and chaos, or in which universal moral principles have been broken cannot be received well by any law, any collective conscience, no matter how artistic they may happen to be. A pick-pocket's art is indeed a difficult fine art, which displays the greatest skill of the hand, but nobody wants it to flourish. Fake currency notes and documents are prepared, with an astounding skill and intelligence, but no one really desires this art to thrive. Man has shown great ingenuity in the arts of forgery and fraud, but no civilized society worth the name was ever prepared to appreciate these arts. Thus it is universally admitted that community life, its peace and welfare, are more valuable than any fine art, any aesthetic taste. It cannot be sacrificed to any art. The one thing about which opinion seems to be divided is that what we regard as harmful to the well-being of society may not be regarded as so by others. But if the view-point of the other people in this regard falls in line with ours, they will also feel like imposing the same restrictions on art and aesthetics as we do.

It is further argued that segregating men and women, and imposing curbs on their free intermingling in society with a view to preventing illicit relationship between them is tantamount to attacking their morals and character. It implies that every individual is being regarded as of doubtful character, and so, the people who desire to impose such curbs have neither faith in their men nor in their women. It all sounds very reasonable but let us take this argument a little further. Every lock that has been put on any door implies that the master of the house has taken the whole world for thieves. The presence of any policeman anywhere testifies that the government regards all its subjects as scoundrels. Any deed that is prepared at a transaction suggests that one party doubts the integrity of the other. Every preventive measure that is adopted to stop incidence of crime signifies that all the people who may be

affected by it have been taken for possible criminals. Thus, according to this argument every single individual is being regarded as a thief, a scoundrel, a dishonest fellow and a person of doubtful character every moment, but nobody seems to feel at all offended by this insult. Then, how is it that with regard to only sex affairs people should have become so sensitive?

The real cause of all this is not difficult to find. The people who still have some vestige of the old moral concepts left their minds regard fornication and sexual anarchy as vicious but not so vicious as may need to be absolutely eradicated. This explains the difference between our respective view-points with regard to the introduction of reformative and preventive measures. If the knowledge of nature dawns on these people and they realize the correct nature of the problem they will have to concede that as long as man remains with the element of animality in him, no civilization that holds the general well-being of society dearer than the personal desires and lusts of its individuals can afford to overlook the importance of these measures.

V

Correct Relationship Between Man and Wife

After founding the family and eradicating sexual lawlessness, the necessary prerequisite for a clean community life is to determine the correct nature of the relationship between man and woman. This implies the determination of their rights and responsibilities, their status and duties in the family circle, strictly according to the principles of justice and fairplay. Intricate as this problem of man's community life is, its solution has always baffled him from the earliest times.

Some nations have given woman the position of governor over man. But no instance is found of a nation that raised its womanhood to such a status and then attained any high position on the ladder of progress and civilization. History does not present the record of any nation which made the woman the ruler of its affairs, and won honour and glory, or performed a work of distinction.

Most nations in the world have made man the governor over woman, but man has generally abused his higher position. The

woman at his hands has been reduced to bondwoman and inhumanly treated: she has been deprived of her economic and social rights, and she has been made an instrument of his sexual indulgence. Outside the family circle a section of women was no doubt acquainted with knowledge and culture, but they were in fact educated and trained to satisfy man's sexual demands in a more gratifiying manner. They were trained to provide man with the pleasure of the ear by their music, pleasure of the eye by their coquetry, and pleasure of the body by their sexual attractions. As regards woman, this was the most disgraceful device invented by man in his selfishness, and the nations which adoped it were doomed to a tragic end.

Modern Western civilization has adopted a third way. This is the way of equality between man and woman, of their equal and similar responsibilities, of competition in the same fields of activity, of winning one's own bread and attaining self-sufficiency in all respects. This social reorganization in the West has not yet attained all its objectives on account of man's natural superiority in every field. Nowhere in life has the woman been able to equal the man. Moreover, she has not been given all those rights that should have accrued from perfect equality. But whatever equality has been attained, it has already corrupted community life. The details of the tragic consequences have already been given in the foregoing pages, and therefore, no further comment is needed.

All these three social systems are devoid of justice, balance and proportion, because they have not taken any guidance from nature and have thus failed to adopt a way in accord with its will and purpose. A little straight thinkingng will show that nature itself points to the correct soultion of these problems. It has in fact all been due to the strong influence of nature that the woman could neither fall below nor exceed beyond a certain limit in spite of her own inclination and the utmost efforts made by man in that regard. Both the extremes that man has followed are the outcome of his defective reasoning and perverted thought. But nature likes the way of justice and fairplay and it itself points to the balanced middle course.

None can deny the fact that as human beings man and woman

are equal. Both make up the human race together as its equal constituent parts. Both are equal partners in building up community life, creating and bringing about civilization, and thus serving humanity. Both have been endowed with hearts, brains and reasoning power, and both possess feelings, desires and the other human urges. Both stand in need of mental and intellectual training and education so that they may duly contribute to the happiness and welfare of society. In view of these facts the claim for equality is absolutely justified, and every good civilization is duty bound to afford its women also the opportunities along with men of developing this natural abilities. They should also be provided the facilities for educational advancement; they should also be given social and economic rights like men; and they should also be granted an honourable place in society so that they may also develop self-respect and thereby their latent human qualities. The nations which have denied their womenfolk this kind of equality, which have kept them ignorant and illiterate, and which have deprived them of social rights, have ultimately themselves been doomed. For to debase and corrupt one half of humanity is to debase and corrupt the whole of humanity. How can wretched, uncultured, ignorant and illiterate mothers rear and bring up children who would turn out to be proud, cultured and enlightened human beings?

But the other aspect of equality is that the man and the woman should have the same field of activity, that their activities should be similar, that they should have to shoulder equal responsibilities in all spheres of life, and that they should have identical positions in society. In support of this view it is said on the authority of scientific observation and experiment that man and woman are equipotential as regards their physical strength and ability. But their being equipotential in this respect is not a sufficent and strong enough basis for the claim that nature also requires them to have the same sorts of pursuits. For such a claim cannot be justified unless it is established that both man and woman possess identical physiological structures, that both have been entrusted with similar duties by nature, and endowed with similar psychological dispositions. The scientific research that has been carried out so far does not lend support to any of these hypotheses.

It has been established by biological research that woman is different from man not only in her appearance and external physical organs but also in the protein molecules of tissue cells.

From the time that sex formation of the foetus starts, the physiological structures of the two sexes begin to develop differently. The female physical system is evolved in order to bear and bring up children. It is to meet the requirements of this end that all physiological changes take place in the female body from infancy to maturity, and it is the demands of this very end that determine its future course of development also.

As soon as a girl attains maturity, menstruation starts affecting the functioning of all her physical organs. The investigations made by famous biologists and physiologists show that during menstruaton the following changes take place in the female organism:

1. The power of resistance in the body decreases with the result that heat is lost unduly, resulting in fall of temperature.
2. Pulse weakens, blood pressure falls below normal and corpuscles decrease.
3. Endocines, tonsils and lymphatic glands undergo changes.
4. The process of protein metabolism suffers a setback.
5. The release of phosphates and chlorides slows down and the process of gaseous metabolism deteriorates.
6. Digestion becomes difficult, and proteins and fats are not easily assimilated by the body.
7. Respiration slows down and the vocal organs suffer changes.
8. Muscles become lethargic and feelings cold.
9. The ability to concentrate weakens.

These changes render an otherwise healthy woman very nearly sick. Hardly 23 per cent women have painless discharge of the menses. Once 1020 women were taken at random and subjected to investigation. It was found that 84 per cent among them suffered

from pain and other troubles during menstruation.[1]

In view of these facts it can be safely asserted that a woman during menstruation is indeed unwell. It is a kind of disability from which she has to suffer every month.

These physical and physiological changes necessarily tell on her mental powers and the functioning of her vital organs. In 1909 Dr. Voicechevsky carried out research and came to the conclusion that during menstruation a woman's power of concentration and her mental abilities in general suffer a setback. Professor Krschiskevsky's psychological observations led him to the conclusion that a woman becomes easily irritable during this period. She becomes emotionally cold and unstable. Sometimes she even loses the ability for reflex action; so much so that her conditioned reflexes become disordered. Due to this she begins bungling in matters of daily habit. A lady tram conductor, for instance, would issue wrong tickets and get confused while counting small change. A lady motor driver would drive solwly as if under strain, and become nervous at every turning. A lady typist would type wrongly, take a long time to type and omit words in spite of care and effort, and would press wrong keys inadvertently. A lady barrister's power of reasoning would be impaired and her presentation of a case would lack logic and the force of argument. A lady magistrate's comprehension and ability to take decisions would both be adversely affected. A female dentist would find it difficult to locate the required instruments. A female singer would lose the quality of her tone and voice; so much so that a phoneticist would easily detect the fault and its cause also. In short, a woman's mental and nervous system becomes lethargic and disorderly during menstruation. Her limbs do not quite obey her will, rather her will and the power of taking decision are overwhelmed by some involuntary force within her. Thus, she begins behaving as if under duress. She loses

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1. Dr. Van de Velde says: "Many women, who are otherwise active, healthy and cheerful, become depressed and moody during the "low" period, and are generally nervous and excitable. Irritability, hypersensitiveness, capriciousness and frequent changes of mood, incompatibility, and a tendency to quarrel easily are symtomatic of these phases (by no means during menstruation only) in many women who are otherwise quite different". (*Sex Hostility in Marriage*, p. 69).—Tr.

freedom of action, and is thus rendered unfit to undertake any work of responsibility.

Professor Lapinsky writes in his book, *The Development of Personality in Woman*, that during menstruation a woman is deprived of her freedom of action; she becomes a slave to involuntary behaviour and her capacity to do anything at will is considerably reduced.

All these changes take place in an otherwise healthy woman, and they can easily take a serious turn. There is evidence to show that a woman loses her mental balance during this period. She becomes easily irritable and furious, behaves at times in a silly and wild manner, and may even commit suicide. Dr. Kraft Ebing writes that a woman who in her daily life may appear to be polite, polished and sweet-tempered, changes outright during menstruation. During the "low" period women have to pass through a terrible ordeal indeed. They become ill-tempered and quarrelsome. Servants, children and husbands complain of their quick-temperedness. Even strangers sometimes receive rude treatment at their hands. Some other authorities on the subject have been led to the conclusion that most crimes by women are committed during this state. A good, righteous woman may commit theft and then feel remorse. Weinberg says on the basis of his observations that 50 per cent of women who commit suicide have been those who were having the menses. In view of this, Dr. Kraft Ebing is of the opinion that before trying a young woman for a crime the court must ascertain that the crime was not committed during menstruation.

More terrible than menstruation is the period of pregnancy for the woman. A pregnant woman cannot undertake any work of mental and physical exertion which she could easily undertake at other times. If a man is made to pass through the rigours of pregnancy, or for that matter a woman when she is not pregnant, he or she will be pronounced a sick person by all standards. During pregnancy a woman's nervous system becomes disordered and remains so for months together. She is mentally deranged; all her mental and psychic energies remain continually upset; and she remains hanging between health and unhealth, and a little carelessness can cause her serious illness. According to Dr. Fischer even a

healthy woman remains subject to extreme mental derangement during pregnancy. She becomes fickle, mentally disturbed and unwell, with the result that her capacity to understand and think is seriously affected. Havelock Ellis, Albert Mole and other writers on the subject are agreed that a pregnant woman, especially during the last month of her pregnancy, cannot be expected to undertake any work of physical or mental exertion.

After delivery has taken place a woman remains exposed to various troubles. Her internal wounds may easily become septic. Her muscles begin to contract and return to the pre-pregnancy condition, and this upsets her whole system. If everything goes well, it takes her several weeks to return to normal. Thus, after impregnation a woman remains sick or nearly sick for about a year, and during this period her general efficiency is reduced to half, even to less than half.

Then comes the period of suckling when she does not live for herself but for the trust that nature has placed in her care. The best of her body is turned into milk for the baby. Her share from the food that she takes is just that much as can keep her alive, the rest being diverted to the production and supply of milk.

Then for a long time to come she has to pay the fullest attention to the bringing up and training of the child.

A substitute found in the modern age for feeding at the breast is to feed the child artificially. But this is no solution, for there can be no real substitute for the food that nature has placed in the mother's breasts for the child. To deprive the child of this natural food is to be inhuman and callous. The specialists are agreed that for the proper development of the child there is no better food than the mother's own milk.

Similarly, nursing homes and nurseries have been proposed for the bringing up of children so that mothers may wholly devote themselves to outdoor activities. But the fact is that no nursing home can provide and make up for mother love. The love, the kindly regards and good wishes so badly needed by a child in early childhood cannot be evoked from the hearts of hired nurses. In fact, these new ways of rearing children have yet to be tried out and tested. The generations which have been brought up in these ways have

not yet attained maturity and shown results. Their character, their morals, their achievements have yet to be tested by the world. It is, therefore, too early yet to claim that the world has found the right substitute for the mother's lap. Thus, the view that is still held is that the mother's lap is the best place where a child can be most naturally nourished and brought up.

Now any person with a little common-sense can understand that though man and woman are equipotential as regards their physical and mental abilities, they have not been entrusted with equal responsibilities by nature. For the continuance of the race man's only function is to impregnate the female. He is then free to have any pursuit in life. In contrast to this, the woman has to bear the whole burden of responsibility. It is to bear this burden that she is fashioned right from the time when she is a mere clot of blood in her mother's womb. Her whole constitution is so built as to meet the requirements to this end. Monthly courses which continue to recur throughout her youth render her unfit to undertake any task of major responsibility or one involving physical or mental exertion, for three to seven or ten days in every month. She has to pass through the ordeal of pregnancy stretching almost over a year, when she does not quite live her own life. Then the two years of suckling are no less terrible when she feeds humanity on her blood at the springs of her breasts. She has to pass sleepless nights and troublous days, especially during the early years of the child's development. During this period she in fact has to sacrifice her comfort and peace, her ease and desires, and everything that she would dearly love to have, to the well-being of the coming generation.

In view of these facts, let us now consider the demands of justice and fairplay. The question is : Will it be just and fair to demand that a woman perform all these natural functions in which man is not, and cannot be, her partner, and also shoulder those social responsibilities equally with him for the carrying out of which he has been absolved from all other natural duties? Will it be just and fair to require her to undergo all sorts of hardships set for her sex by nature and also to earn her living in the economic field? Will it be proper and right to make her take equal part with man in

defending the country, establishing peace and promoting the cause of industry and commerce, agriculture and administration of justice? Above all, will it be just and right to require her to allure men's hearts also by her presence in mixed gatherings and provide them with means of entertainment and pleasure? It is not justice, it is sheer injustice; it is not equality, but sheer inequality. Justice and fairplay would demand that the one who has already been burdened by nature should be given light duties in society, and the one who has no such natural duty should be required to shoulder all the important and heavy social responsibilities including the duties of supporting and protecting the family.

Not only is it unfair to load woman with the outdoor duties, but she cannot in fact be expected to perform them with manly vigour. These duties can be suitably carried out only by those workers whose efficiency does not waver, who can perform them equally well at all times with persistence, and whose mental and physical abilities can always be relied upon. But the workers who are rendered unfit, or nearly unfit, for a number of days every month, whose capacity to work falls short of the required standards time and again, cannot be expected to shoulder these responsibilities. Imagine for a while the plight of a land or naval force which wholly consists of women. It is quite possible that right in the midst of war, a fair number of them might be down with the menstrual discharge, a good number of delivery cases forced to stay in bed, and a fair percentage of pregnant ones fuming and sulking uselessly. One may say that the military service is rather too strenuous for women. But one may ask: Which is the service among the police, judicial, administrative, foreign, railway, industrial and commercial services which does not require steadfast, dependable capacity to work? Therefore, the people who want women to undertake manly duties perhaps want to 'defeminise' them all and finish off the human race. Or perhaps they want that a certain percentage among them should always be set aside to be 'defeminised', or perhaps they want to lower the general standards of efficiency in all affairs of life.

But adopt whatever attitude one may, to prepare woman for manly jobs is utterly against the will and design of nature. It neither helps humanity nor the woman herself. Since biologically

woman has been created to bring forth and rear children, psychologically also she has been endowed with such abilities as suit her natural duties. This explains why she has been endowed with tender feelings of love, sympathy, compassion, clemency, pity and sensitiveness in an unusual measure. And since in the sexual life man has been made active and woman passive, she has been endowed with those very qualities alone which help and prepare her for the passive role in life only. That is why she is tender and plastic instead of rough and rigid. That is why she is soft and pliable, submissive and impressionable, yielding and timid by nature. With these qualities she cannot be expected to function successfully in the spheres of life which demand firmness and authority, resistance and cold-temperedness, and which require the exercise of unbiased, objective judgement and strong will-power. To drag the woman into these fields of activity, therefore, is to abuse her as well as the fields of activity themselves.

This will bring about the woman's downfall and not her advancement in life. Advancement is not curbing one's natural endowments and creating instead such qualities artificially as do not form part of one's nature. Real advancement consists in developing the natural gifts, polishing and refining them, and providing for them better and ever increasing opportunities for action.

This will lead to the woman's failure and not to her success. Man and woman are not equipotential in all aspects of life: in some woman is weaker than man, in others she is naturally stronger than he. The modern man wants the poor woman to compete with him in those fields where she is weaker by nature. This will inevitably keep the woman suppressed and generally inferior to man. Try however hard he may, it is impossible that geniuses favourably comparable with Aristotle, Ibn-i-Sina, Kant, Hegel, Khayyām, Shakespeare, Alexander, Napoleon, Salah-ud-Din, Nizam-ul-Mulk Tūsi and Bismarck will ever come forth from among women. Similarly, all the men of the world together—however hard they try—cannot produce from among their sex even a most ordinary mother.

It is not even useful to the well-being of human society. Man's

life and civilization on the earth stand as much in need of coarseness, vehemence and aggressiveness as of tenderness, softness and plasticity. Good generals, good statesmen, and good administrators are as necessary as good mothers, good wives and good house-keepers. To ignore or discard any of these aspects is tantamount to harming and corrupting man's social life itself.

This is the division of labour which nature herself has devised between the sexes. All the researches that have been carried out so far in biology, anatomy, psychology and sociology point to the same division. Bearing a child and shouldering the responsibility of rearing it is a decisive factor which delimits the woman's field of activity in human social life. No man-made device can alter or affect the will of nature in this regard. Thus a righteous civilization is the one which jealously guards this natural division of labour, which provides the woman her rightful and honourable place in society, which recognizes her social and economic rights, which loads her only with the domestic duties, and which makes man responsible for all outdoor duties including the duty of supporting and protecting the family. A civilization that disregards this division of labour may show temporarily some sign of material progress and prosperity, but it will surely meet a tragic end eventually. For when the woman is loaded with the economic and social responsibilities along with the man, she will throw off the burden of her natural duties and thus bring social life as well as humanity to grief. The woman can, if she strives against her temperament and natural physical structure, carry out with some success all the duties assigned to man by nature, but man in no way can make himself fit to bear and rear children.

Keeping in view this natural division of labour, the following will be the distribution of duties for man and woman in the social and family organization:

1. Earning a livelihood for the family, supporting and protecting it, and carrying out the laborious sorts of social duties should be the responsibility of the man. Thus his education should be such as may enable him to perform these duties in the best way possible.

2. Bringing up children, looking after the domestic affairs and making home-life sweet, pleasant and peaceful should be entrusted

to the woman. Thus the aim of her education and training should be to prepare her for these duties.

3. In order to maintain the family system and save it from confusion some one must be entrusted with necessary authority within the legal limits so that the family does not turn into an army without a leader. Such a one can only be the man. For the member whose mental and physical state becomes unstable time and again during menstruation and pregnancy cannot be expected to use such authority with wisdom and discretion.

4. To maintain this division and the pattern of education and training there must be some safeguards provided in the social system so that foolish and senseless people do not disrupt the clean community life by confusing and mixing up the different fields of activity of the two sexes.

CHAPTER 9

Human Limitations

IN the foregoing pages an attempt has been made to determine the bases and principles of man's social life in the light of modern research and scientific observations. These bases and principles give rise to a righteous society that takes due cognizance of all the demands of man's nature, his temperament and his physiological structure. Nothing that has been said in the discussion is ambiguous or of doubtful nature. Established facts only of which almost all educated people are generally aware have been cited. But man's inherent inability and helplessness is such that in no social system devised by him he has recognized and given due place to the familiar and clear indications of nature. Obviously, man cannot be unaware of the demands of his own nature; his mental processes and physical endowments are not hidden from him. But in spite of that he has not so far been able to devise a balanced social system whose pattern and principles might have been determined with a view to subserving adequately the demands and requirements of his nature to enable him to realize the higher ends of life.

Real Cause of Inability

The real cause of man's inability and helplessness has already been pointed out in the beginning of this book. Man by nature is incapable of viewing simultaneously all the aspects of a problem or affair of life as a whole. He is fascinated by some one aspect of life which has a special appeal for him. And when he is inclined to view one aspect only, other aspects either recede into the background, or he deliberately overlooks them. This weakness of man can be noticed even in the most minor and personal affairs of his life. How can it be then expected that the major social problems of life, each of which has countless facets, will remain unaffected by this

human weakness? Man has certainly been endowed with knowledge and reason, but in a few affairs of life only is he guided purely by reason. His behaviour in general is determined by sentiments and personal inclinations. But when he realizes that he has been misled, he begins to invoke the help of reason and knowledge. Then, even if his knowledge shows him the other sides of the matter and his reason warns him of his one-sidedness, he is not prepared to retrace his steps. On the contrary, he starts forcing knowledge and reason to supply arguments in support of the particular trend that he has already adopted.

Some Significant Instances

Man's one-sidedness signifying his drift to extremes is most glaring in respect of his social behaviour under review here.

One section of the people became unduly inclined towards morality and spirituality and began looking upon the sex relation between man and woman as vile and loathsome. Such an imbalance has been effected by Buddhism, Christianity and some Hindu sects. It is under their influence that sex relation is regarded as evil in most parts of the world even today, whether it is contracted inside marriage or outside it. What were the consequences of this trend?—the unnatural, anti-social ascetic system of life began to be cherished as an ideal of morality and purity of the self. A great number of men and women laid waste their mental and physical energies in their conflict or fight against nature. People who married in order to satisfy the demands of nature did so under compulsion, as if they had to satisfy their base urges. Obviously, such a relation can neither become the basis for love and co-operation between the spouses nor can it help in creating a righteous and prosperous civilization. More than that, this so-called moral concept has also been responsible for degrading the woman in the society. Those people who upheld asceticism as a way of life regarded sex attraction as devilish, and considered woman, the cause of this attraction, as the devil's agent. Her very being was regarded as unholy which must be treated with hatred and contempt by those who wish to attain the purity of the self. Christian, Buddhist and Hindu literatures are saturated with this view about the woman. Thus, it should not be difficult for one

to judge the place of the woman in a society which is based on such a view about her.

In contrast to this, another section of the people became increasingly inclined to satisfy the urges of the body, so much so that they overlooked human nature and went to the extreme of even disregarding the demands of animal nature. This state of affairs has so prevailed over the Western civilization that no attempt to suppress it can now avail. The Western law does not recognize fornication as a crime; rape only is a crime or encroachment upon somebody else's legal rights. If neither of these crimes is committed, fornication in itself is no punishable offence; it is not even a moral evil entailing remorse. So far the Western attitude towards sex-life was within the bounds of animal nature, but then it broke those bounds also. It overlooked the biological function of sexual intercourse, which is procreation and propagation of the species, and reduced it to a means of a mere pleasure of the body. When man who was moulded by God into "a most noble image" reaches such a stage, he is reduced to "the lowest of the low". First, he violates his human nature and adopts, like animals, an indiscriminate sex relation which cannot become the basis for a civilization. Then he violates even his animal nature and prevents the birth of offspring, which is the natural result of his sex relation, so that new generations may be stopped from coming forth to continue his species.

Some people appreciated the importance of the family but organized it in such a manner that one partner became subjected to undue, unnatural restrictions, with the result that the balance between the rights and duties was upset. A glaring instance of this is the Hindu family system. This system does not allow the woman any freedom of thought and action. She does not possess any social and economic rights. Whether she is a girl, a housewife, or a mother, she is always a slave; as a widow she is worse than a slave. She has duties only to perform; as to privileges and rights, she has to go without them. This system tries to treat her like dumb cattle from the very beginning so that she does not develop any awareness of herself at all. No doubt the family became highly stable by this device as there remained no possibility of the feminist revolt, but the community on the whole suffered grievously. By debasing one

half of the community this social system indeed worked for its own doom, the consequences of which are now being felt by the Hindus themselves.

Some other people tried to raise the status of woman and bestowed on her freedom of thought and action to an extent that the family system was completely ruined. The wife, the daughter, the son, all became free, and the house was divided against itself. The husband cannot question the wife as to where she spent the night and the father cannot question the daughter as to her love affairs. The man and the wife regard themselves as two mutually equal friends who have joined together to make a family on equal terms. The children are like junior members of the association. A minor temperamental difference is enough to tear the family asunder, for the bond of mutual respect and obedience which is so necessary to keep the members bound together does not exist at all in the family circle. This is the Western civilization, whose upholders claim to be the final authorities on the principles of civics and sociology. If someone wants to be acquainted with the reality of their claim to authority one needs only to go through the proceedings of some marriage and divorce or juvenile court of Europe or America. The crime statistics recently published by the British Home Office reveal that juvenile delinquency is on the increase in England as a result of the breaking down of the family discipline.[1]

As a matter of fact, no man-made social system has so far succeeded in understanding rightly the human sense of modesty, especially in the woman, and providing for it duly and practically in any sartorial design or way of life. Though modesty has been regarded as the most noble trait of feminine character, this has nowhere been kept in view in a rational and balanced way. No one has cared to determine exactly how far and to what extent the female body needs to be covered. No attempt has been made to formulate principles for the preservation of modesty in the dress and social etiquette of the men and women. Nothing has been done to set rationally the bounds of nakedness for the human body, which may not be exposed between male and male, female and female, and male and female. Important though this matter was from the

1. Please refer to *Blue Book of Crime Statistics*, 1934, for details.

viewpoint of public morality and culture, yet it was treated with neglect and impunity. It was partly left to the customs and tradition which change with the changing social condition and partly to the personal choice of individuals. But, as is well-known, human beings are neither equal in their sense of modesty nor has every individual been endowed with such sensibility and power as to choose the right course. Consequently, one finds a strange admixture of modesty and immodesty in the dressand way of life of different communities, expressing no rational propriety, no uniformity, no adherence to any principle. In the Eastern countries it did not go beyond certain crude forms, but in the West immodesty in the people's clothing habits and way of life has crossed all limits with the result that they have lost all sense of modesty. The Weterners now seem to believe that the sense of modesty is not due to any natural human urge but has sprung up in consequence of man's habit of clothing. Covering one's nakedness and being prone to modesty has nothing to do with morality and culture. It is in fact one of the factors stimulating man's sexual urge.

What are the practical manifestations of this concept of immodesty and indecency?—half-covering attires, beauty contests, nude dances and pictures, indecent stage performances, ever increasing nudism—man's virtual reversion to mere animality!

The same immoderation can be seen in other aspects of the matter, too. People who valued morals and chastity did not protect the woman as a living, rationl, soulful entity but as a lifeless ornament or a precious stone. They did not pay due attention to the question of her education and cultural training. As a matter of fact, this aspect was as important for the woman for the advancement of civilization as for the man. In cortrast to this, the people who appreciated the importance of female education overlooked the significance of morals and chastity, and thus, worked in another way for the doom of their civilization.

People who kept in view the natural division of labour made the woman responsible for household duties and the rearing of children only, and made the man responsible for supporting the family. But

1. Such a view has been expressed by Wester Marck also in his *The History of Human Marriage*.

while dividing responsibility they failed to strike a balance between the duties and the rights. They deprived the woman of all economic rights; they refused her the right of inheritance; and they conferred all the rights to acquire and hold property on the man. This economic helplessness of the woman made her a virtual slave of the man who became her master.

Some other people came up to compensate for this injustice by restoring to the woman her economic and social right, but they committed another blunder. Being materialists, they thought that the economic and social emancipation of the woman consisted in enabling her to become an earning member of the family, like the man, and an equal partner with him in shouldering all the social responsibilities of life. From the materialist viewpoint it was an attractive proposition for it not only lightened the man's burden of providing for the family but also it helped to almost double the family income and supply of the means of luxury and comfort. Besides, it helped the nation to employ two-fold labour, both physical and mental, for the running of its economic and sociological machine, with the result that the social progress received a sudden boost. But this undue inclination towards the material and economic aspect obscured these people's vision of some equally, rather more, important aspects of life, and some others they overlooked deliberately. They violated the laws of nature which their own scientific researches had confirmed. They claimed to treat the woman justly, but they themselves are a witness that they have treated her most unjustly. They wanted to bless her with the equality of status, but in fact they have treated her with sheer inequality. And this is amply supported by their own researches and investigations. They wanted to reform civilization, but in fact they have worked for its disintegration, the details of which are provided by their own descriptive statistics of which they cannot be unaware. This is because, as has been pointed out above, man is inherently incapable of making a law for his life giving due place to and keeping balance among all his interests. His selfish and whimscial nature drives him towards one or the other extreme, and when he has been driven into one extreme, he loses sight of most of his other interests, or closes his eyes to most of them deliberately. We cannot do

better than record here the evidence provided by a distinguished Russian scientist of this deliberately self-imposed blindness. Anton Nemilov who is a Communist through and through, takes pains in his book, *The Biological Tragedy of Woman*,[1] to prove conclusively the natural inequality of man and woman by citing scientific experiments and observations, but then himself writes :

"The idea of social equality of the sexes has been penetrating increasingly into the mass consciousness. Although we should ardently defend the principle of social equality of the sexes dictated by the most elementary justice, we must not delude ourselves that it is a simple and easy matter to carry it out in actual life. Nowhere in the world has so much been done for the equalization of man and woman, and nowhere are there more liberal laws in this respect than in Soviet Russia. Nevertheless, the fact is that the actual position of woman within the family has altered but little since the October Revolution". (Pp. 76-77).

Not only within the family but within society, too :

"Due to our inherited traditions woman as a social being is still relegated to an inferior status. If we observe the attitude of social thought of the present-day, we shall find to our surprise that the prejudice concerning woman's inequality is still deeply ingrained in the consciousness not only of intellectually undeveloped individuals, but even in the most advanced circles of the Soviet intelligentsia. The condescension and contempt marked in the attitude towards woman is so general that often we even fail to notice it. Moreover, women themselves have become so thoroughly inured to it that they are prone to regard a radically different attitude as something unworthy of the male or even as evidence of weakness and perhaps impotence on his part."

"If we broach this topic to a scientist, a writer, a student of a workers' college, a "Nepman" (private trader), or a one hundred per cent proletarian, it soon becomes apparent that he does not regard woman as an equal. If we review the contemporary

1. The English edition of this book was published from London in 1932.

novel even by a most advanced writer, we are certain to encounter here and there passages betraying this condescending attitude towards woman". (Pp. 194-195).

"This may be explained by the present period of adjustment and also because here the revolutionary principles collide with the very important circu mstances, namely, the *biological inequality* of the sexes with their unequal burdens". (P. 77).

. But why? See another extract and you may draw the conclusion: "Frankly speaking, symptoms of sexual anarchy are found among all workers. This is a very serious condition, threatening the socialistic order, and should be combated in every possible way, for the struggle on this front is very difficult.

"I could mention thousands of cases of sexual licentiousness, not only among the uninformed, but among the most intelligent and advanced members of the working class." (Pp 202-203).

How clear and plain is the evidence provided by these extracts! On the one hand, it is conceded that nature herself has allowed no equality between man and woman, that no attempt to establish equality in practical life has borne fruit, and that all efforts to establish such an equality against the will of Nature have resulted in opening the flood-gates of indecency, endangering the well-being of society itself. On the other, it is asserted that the rights of the woman should not be restricted in the social system, and if any restrictions are imposed, they will be resented and opposed. There cannot be a greater proof of how man—even an educated, sensible and well-informed man—can become such a slave to his personal whims as to ignore the results of his own research, belie his own observations, and instead, pursue his personal desires, no matter how strong may be the arguments provided by his own sciences against his attitude and how conclusive and clear the reasons and consequences that come to his notice against his trends.

"Think! who, besides Allah, can guide the man who makes his lust his god, the man whom Allah wills to mislead, setting a seal upon his ears and heart and drawing a veil over his eyes? Will you not take heed?" (*Al-Qur'an*, **45: 23**).

Moderation of Islamic Law

In this world of immoderation and excesses, there is only one social system that excels in moderation and balance, that provides duly for each aspect of human nature, even for its quite minor aspects. This system acquaints one with man's physical structure, his animal instinct, his human nature, his psychological traits and his natural urges in a complete and comprehensive way. It keeps in view the will of nature in the creation of all these aspects and provides for each one of these perfectly, without harming even the very minor one. The attainment of these objects leads to the attainment of the higher object, that of man's creation on the earth. This moderation, this balance, this co-ordination, is so complete in itself that it would be impossible for man to produce it by his own intellectual effort. It is absolutely impossible that a man-made law should be free from all sorts of one-sidedness. Not to speak of making a complete law for himself, a layman cannot even fully comprehend the wisdom of this highly moderate, balanced and perfect law, unless he is exceptionally talented with straight thinking, and has acquired knowledge and experience through long years of meditation and serious thought. I do not praise this law because I believe in Islam, but in fact I have come to believe in Islam because I find in it perfect balance, co-ordination and harmony with the laws of nature. When I see this, my heart bears evidence that the Maker of the Law could only be the One Who created and designed the universe, Who is the Knower of the Seen and the Unseen. The truth is that such a One alone can show to the Children of Adam, who easily drift into by-paths, the Universal Way of moderation and justice.

> "Say: Lord, Creator of the heavens and the earth, Who hast knowledge of the seen and the unseen. Thou alone can judge the disputes of Thy servants". (*Al-Qur'an*, 39 : 46).

CHAPTER 10

SOCIAL SYSTEM OF ISLAM—I

BASIC CONCEPTS

A SPECIAL characteristic of Islam is that it itself explains the wisdom of its law. For instance, Islam has explained the wisdom of the principles and laws of nature on which it bases its law for regulating mutual relationships between man and woman.

Real Significance of Sex

The first thing that has been stated and explained in this connection is:

"All things We made in pairs." (*Al-Qur'an*, 51 : 49).

This verse makes a reference to the universality of the sex-law and the Master Engineer of the Universe Himself divulges the secret of His Creation. He says that the universe has been designed on the relationship of pairs. In other words, all the parts of this great machine have been created in pairs, and all that one can see in this world is indeed the result of the mutual interaction of these pairs.

Now let us consider the nature of the sex-relationship. This relationship itself implies that one partner in the pair should be active and the other receptive and passive, one prompt to influence and the other ready to be influenced, one prepared to act and the other willing to be acted upon. This relationship between the active functioning and the passive functioning, influencing and being influenced, acting and being acted upon, is the sex-relation between the partners of a pair. This is the basic relation which gives rise to all other relations functioning and operating in the world. All that exists in this world has been created in pairs, and the real and basic relationship between the members of each pair is the sex-relationship, the relationship signifying "activity" and "passivity", though it has assumed different forms in different strata of the Creation. One form of this relationship, for instance, is that

which exists among the elements; another is that found among the inorganic substances; another that seen in the organic life; and still another that which exists among the animal species. All these sex-divisions, so to say, are different in form and nature and object of their creation, but the basic sex-relation is common to them all. In each species of every class, it is essential that for the realization of the great object of nature, which is the creation of new relationships, one member of the pair should possess the ability to act and the other the inclination to be acted upon.

Now that the meaning of the verse has been specified, three basic principles of sex-law can be deduced from it :

1. The principle according to which Allah has created this world and the way according to which He is running its great System cannot be unholy and vile. It indeed is and ought to be holy and sacred. Though the opponents of this scheme may hold it as dirty and despicable and so shun it, the Maker and Owner of the Factory cannot desire that His Factory should cease to function. He will naturally want that all the parts of His Machine should continue working in order to fulfil the purpose for which they have been designed.

2. The existence of both the active and the passive partners is equally important for the purposes of the Factory. Neither the "activity" of the active partner is in any way exalted nor the "passivity" of the passive partner in any way debased. The excellence of an active partner is that he should possess the ability to act and also the other masculine qualities, so that he may effectively perform the active part of his duty in the sex-relation. In contrast to this, the excellence of a passive partner is that she possesses the feminine qualities to an extent that she may carry out the passive part of the sex-relation well. As a matter of fact, only a foolish, unskilled person can think of removing even a minor part of an ordinary machine and employing it for a function for which it has not been actually designed. In the first place, he will not succeed in his object; and if he tries seriously, he will only succeed in breaking the machine itself. Similar is the case with the great machine of the world. Only the foolish, inexperienced people can think of replacing the active partners in it by the passive partners, and *vice versa*. But the

Maker of the Machine can never commit such a folly. He will employ the active part in its right place and develop it accordingly, and employ the passive part in its own right place, and arrange to develop in it the desired qualities of passivity.

3. "Activity" in itself is naturally superior to "passivity" and femininity. This superiority is not due to any merit in masculinity against any demerit in femininity. It is rather due to the fact of possessing natural qualities of dominance, power and authority. A thing that acts upon something else is able to do so on account of its being dominant, more powerful and impressive. On the other hand, the thing that submits and yields, behaves so simply because it is by nature passive, weaker and inclined to be impressed and influenced. Just as the existence of both the active and the passive partners is necessary for the act to occur, so it is also necessary that the active partner should be dominant and able to produce the desired effect, and the passive partner yielding and inclined to be receptive. For if both the partners are equally powerful and neither is dominant, there will be no question of submission, and the act will not take place at all. If the cloth is as hard as the needle, sewing cannot take place. If the soil is not soft enough to yield to the dominance of the pick and plough, no cultivation and construction becomes possible. In short, all actions that take place in the world cannot take place unless there exists a passive partner for every active partner, and the passive partner possesses the qualities of yielding and surrendering. Thus, the active partner in a human pair should naturally have the qualities of dominance, vehemence and authority, called manliness, for he has to possess these qualities for performing the active part of his sex duty. In contrast to this, the passive partner should naturally be soft, tender, elegant and impressionable, in short womanly, for these qualities alone can help her perform her passive role successfully. People who do not know this secret have either regarded the natural superiority of the active partner as something meritorious in itself and debased the passive partner, or they have wholly overlooked this superiority and endeavoured to produce in the passive partner qualities that properly belong to the active partner only. But the Engineer who has designed these parts fits them in the machine in such a manner

that both become equally endowed and honourable, yet dominant and yielding as required by their respective natures, so that they may fulfil the purposes of their sex-relation. They both should not become as hard as stone that they may only meet to break each other instead of combining and co-operating for fruitful purposes.

These principles can be deduced from the basic fact of division into the male and female. The human male and female, being physical entities, do by their nature require that these principles should govern all their relationships. As will be explained later, these have been fully utilized in the social Law that has been framed by the Creator of the heavens and earth.

Man's Animal Nature and its Demands

When we consider the matter a little more closely we find that man and woman are not only physical entities but they are living organisms also. Let us now see what is the natural object of their being a sexual pair. The *Qur'an* says :

> "He has given you wives from among yourselves to multiply you, and cattle male and female". (**42** : 11).
>
> "Your wives are your farms". (**2** : 223).

In the first verse, mention has been made of the pairs of man and animal together, and of the common object intended thereof, that is, the propagation of the species as a result of their sex relationship.

In the second verse, man has been considered separately from the other animal species, and it has been indicated that the relation between the partners of a human pair is that of a cultivator and his farm. This is a biological fact and the most appropriate illustration from the biological viewpoint of the relationship between the man and the woman.

These verses furnish us with three more principles :

1. Allah has created man also as male and female, like all other animals, for the purpose of prepetuating the human race. This is a clear demand of man's animal nature and cannot be overlooked. God has not created the human species to allow only a handful of its individuals to nourish and tend themselves on the earth and disappear. He indeed wants it to survive till an appointed time.

He has placed sex urge in the animal nature of man so that human beings join as pairs and procreate to keep His earth humming with life. Therefore, a law given by God cannot be such as will crush and suppress the sexual urge, and inculcate its hatred and teach total abstinence from it. On the contrary, such law will also fully provide for the satisfaction of this urge of human nature.

2. By comparing the man and the woman to the cultivator and the farm, it has been indicated that the natural relationship of the partners of the human pair is different from that of the other animal pairs. Apart from the human aspect, the physical structure of the human pair from the animal point of view also has been so designed as to help bind them in an abiding relationship like the one found between a cultivator and his farm. Just as it is not enough for a cultivator only to sow seeds but also to water his field, manure it and look after it, so woman also is not such a farm that an animal would by the way cast a seed in her, and then let her grow it into a tree! But in fact when she becomes pregnant she stands in need of being carefully looked after and cared for by her 'cultivator'.

3. The sex attraction in a human pair is biologically of the same nature as is found in the other animal species. Every member of a species feels itself inclined instinctively towards every member of the opposite sex. The powerful urge of procreation placed in them by nature causes all those members of the opposite sexes who possess the ability to procreate attracted mutually. Therefore, the Law made by the Supreme Creator cannot disregard this weak aspect of man's animal nature, for it possesses such a strong inclination towards sexual anarchy as cannot be controlled without resort to special measures like checks and balances. If man once loses control of himself nothing can save him from becoming a brute animal, rather "the lowest of the low" even among animals.

> "We moulded man into a most noble image, then We reduced him to the lowest of the low : except the believers who did good works". (*Al-Qur'an*, 95 : 4-6).

Human Nature and its Demands

As we have pointed out above, anmial nature is like the base and foundation on which the superstructure of humanity has been

built. For the sake of man's survival and propagation, both as an individual and as a species, Allah has endowed his animal nature with an urge, and the ability to realize that urge, for each and every thing that is necessary for the purpose. And the Divine Will does not mean that any of these urges should be curbed, or any of these abilities should be destroyed, for all these urges and abilities are necessary, and without them man and his species cannot possibly survive. The Divine Will, however, is that man should not behave like a mere animal while satisfying his urges and employing his abilities, but he should be human in his behaviour in so far as the demands of his human and super-animal nature are concerned. For this purpose Allah has ordained the *Shar'iah* injunctions in order to regulate the conduct of man. He has also warned man that if he transgresses the limits set by Him and drifts into extremes, he will be working for his own doom.

> "He that transgresses Allah's bounds wrongs his own self"
> (*Al-Qur'an*, 65 : 1).

Now let us examine the traits and demands of human nature as stated in the *Qur'an* with regard to sex.

1. The kind of mutual relationship, with which partners of the human pair have been endowed, has been stated as follows ;

> "He created for you mates from among yourselves that you may find rest and joy in them, and created between you love and mercy". (30 : 21).
>
> "They are (like) a garment to you and you are (like) a garment to them". (2 : 187).

The verse which mentions together the creation of the pairs of man and animal also states the object of the creation of sex as propagation, but in the above verse, a higher function of sex in man has been indicated. That is, the mutual relation of a human pair should not only be of sexual nature; it should also be a relation of love and sympathy and a relation of the inclination of the heart and soul. The two partners should be the real partners with each other, who can share each other's grief and joy. They should have such a close fellow feeling and abiding companionship between them as exists between the dress and the body. As has been explained at length above, this relation between the sexes is the bed-

rock on which the human civilization is built. The words "that you may find rest and joy in them" allude to the fact that woman is the source of peace and comfort for man and that the natural function of the woman is to provide for the man a place of peace and comfort in this world, which is ridden with struggle, toil and hardship. This is the home life of man whose significance and importance has been overlooked by the Westerners in pursuit of material gains. The fact, however, is that this aspect of life is as important and necessary as any other aspect of civilization for the well-being of the social and community life of man.

2. This sex relation not only demands mutual love betwen the male and the female but also it demands that they should have a deep spiritual relation with their offspring, the direct result of their sex relationship. The Divine Will has endowed man, and especially the woman, with such a physcial structure and natural course of pregnancy and suckling that the love of offspring becomes her very nature. The *Qur'an* says :

> "His mother bears him with much pain and he is not weaned before he is two years of age". (31 : 14).
>
> "With much pain his mother bears him, and with much pain she brings him into the world. He is born and weaned in thirty months". (46 : 15).

The man also loves his offspring though his love is not as intense as of the mother.

> "Men are tempted by the lure of women and offspring". (3 : 14).

This natural love helps establish blood and marital relations. From these relations then spring up families and clans and nations whose inter-relationships give birth to civilization.

> "It was He Who created man from water and gave him kindred of blood and of marriage". (25 : 45).
>
> "Man! We have created you from a male and a female and divided you into nations and clans that you may be able to recognise one another". (49 : 13).

Thus the ties of blood and the relations of descent and marriage provide indeed the very basic and natural foundation for the human society. And the strength of these relations depends on the certainty and indubitability of parentage and purity of descent.

3. Another demand of the human nature is that if a person leaves something behind him from the fruits of his lifelong labours and toil, he wishes it to go to his offspring and near relations with whom he is bound in ties of blood all his life.

" . . . according to the Book of Allah, those who are bound by ties of blood are nearest to one another (in the matter of inheritance)" (8 : 75).

"Allah does not regard your adopted sons as your own sons". (33 : 4).

This shows how important the purity of descent is for the purpose of the division of inheritance.

4. Sense of modesty is a part of human nature. Man by nature wants to cover and conceal some parts of his body. This urge has impelled him from the earliest times to adopt one or the other sort of dress. The *Qur'an* in this regard strongly refutes the modern prevalent theory. It asserts that the urge to conceal those parts of the human body which possess sex attraction for the opposite sex is quite natural with man. Of course, Satan urges him to reveal these parts :

> "But Satan tempted them, so that he might reveal to them their shameful parts that had been hidden from each other". (7 : 20).
> "When they tasted of the tree, their shameful parts became visible to them and they began to cover themselves with the leaves of the Garden". (7 : 22).

Then the *Qur'an* says that Allah has given man clothing so that he may cover his shameful parts therewith and also appear attractive. But it does not demand that one should cover one's shameful parts only; it also demands that while doing so one should fear Allah too :

> "O Children of Adam! We have sent down to you clothing in order to cover the shameful parts of your body and serve as protection and decoration; and the best of all garments is the garment of piety". (7 : 26).

These are the basic concepts of the Social System of Islam. Keeping these concepts in view, one should study the whole system which has been built on them. During this study one should note well how Islam has maintained balance and logical consistency while

applying these concepts to the practical details of life. The common weakness of all man-made laws that we have studied is that their basic concepts are not in harmony with their practical details. In other words, their principles and their details contradict each other; the spirit of their fundamentals differs radically from that of their application in the details of actual practice in the day to day affairs of life. Man invents a theory of high principles in the armchair, but when he brings it into the real world and tries to apply it to the practical problems of life he is so baffled by the complexity of affairs that he forgets his own theory. None of the man-made laws has been found to be free from this weakness. Now let us examine, and examine as critically as we can, the Law which was presented before the world by an unlettered unschooled desert dweller of Arabia, even without the help of a legislature or select committee. We shall see that this Law is absolutely free from all sorts of logical inconsistencies and contradictions.

CHAPTER II

Social System of Islam—II

FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES

THE most important problem of social life is, as we have mentioned elsewhere, how to regulate the sexual urge into a system and prevent it from running wild. For without this, it is not possible to keep control over the community life, or even if that becomes possible, there is no way to save the community from mental and moral decay and disintegration. In order to achieve that purpose, Islam has organized the relations between the husband and the wife and reduced them to a system.

"Prohibited Relations"—(*Muharramat*)[1]

To start with, the law of Islam prohibits those men and women for each other who are bound by nature to live together in close relationship. For instance, the following relations cannot marry each other in Islam : mother and son, father and daughter, brother and sister, paternal aunt and nephew, paternal uncle and niece, maternal aunt and nephew, maternal uncle and niece, step-father and daughter, step-mother and son, mother-in-law and son-in-law, father-in-law and daughter-in-law, wife's sister and brother-in-law (during sister's lifetime) and foster relations. (4 : 23-25). By prohibiting them for each other, Islam has so cleansed the men and women of these relations that they cannot even imagine being sexually attracted mutually, except for those morally depraved people of animal nature whose animality does not allow them to be bound by any moral discipline.

Prohibition of Adultery

Besides the above prohibitions, Islam has also forbidden to

1. That is, those relations between whom marriage is forbidden in the law of Islam.

take as wives those women who are already married.

"And forbidden to you are the wedded wives of other people". (4 : 24).

Then, as for the rest of women, it has been made unlawful to have any sexual relations with them :

"Approach not adultery, for it is foul and indecent". (17 : 32).

Marriage

Thus, by imposing restrictions Islam has closed all the ways leading to sexual anarchy. But for the satisfaction of man's animal nature and propagation of the human race it was inevitable that at least one door for sexual satisfaction must be kept open. This was done by giving permission for marriage. Islam ordained that the sexual desire must be satisfied, not by unlawful sexual liaison nor secretly, nor openly and immodestly, but through the prescribed course so that the whole society comes to know, and it is established beyond doubt, that such and such a man and woman are now meant for each other.

> "It has been made lawful for you to seek in marriage with your wealth any other women than those specified, provided that you keep them in wedlock and not in licence. . . .
>
> "You may marry them with the permission of their guardians. . . . so that they may live a decent life in wedlock and not in licence, nor may have secret illicit relations". (4 : 24, 25).

According to this principle of moderation, the sexual relation which was forbidden and unlawful outside marriage has not only been declared lawful within marriage but also has been commended as good. It is enjoined on the Muslims and its avoidance is regarded with disfavour. Marriage is looked upon as a virtuous deed; so much so that if a woman observes a non-obligatory fast, or busies herself in worship or recitation of the *Qur'an* with a view to evading the lawful desire of her husband, she commits a sin. Here are a few sayings of the Holy Prophet that amply illustrate the point :

1. "You should marry, for that is the best way of saving yourself from casting evil eyes, and of safeguarding yourself against sexual immorality. The one who does not

possess the means to marry should fast, because fasting curbs sexuality". (*Al-Tirmizi*).

2. "By Allāh, I am the best among you in the matter of fearing Allah and avoiding His displeasure. But in spite of that I observe fast and break it, offer prayers and sleep at night, and marry women. This is my way, and whosoever shuns my way does not belong to me". (*Al-Bukhāri*).
3. "The woman should not observe a non-obligatory fast without the permission of her husband". (*Al-Bukhāri*).
4. "The woman who passes a night with a view to evading the desire of her husband is cursed by the angels till she attends on him". (*Al-Bukhāri*).
5. "When one of you happens to see a woman and is attracted by her, he should go to his wife, for she has the same as she (the other woman) had". (*Al-Tirmizi*).

The *Shari'ah*, by enjoining these injunctions, wants to close all the ways leading to sexual anarchy, and intends to restrict sexual relation to marriage only. It does not like any sexual feelings to be aroused outside marriage. If, however, such feelings are aroused naturally or incidentally, they should be satisfied mutually between the husband and the wife. This is the only way for man to protect himself against all sorts of unnatural, self-created sexual excitements and to conserve his energy for the service of society. It desires that the sexual love and attraction which Allah has created in every man and woman for the purpose of running this Factory, should be exclusively employed in creating and establishing the family. Thus, married life is commendable in every way as it meets the ends of human nature, animal instinct and Divine Law alike. On the contrary, avoiding marriage is in every way blameworthy, for it must entail one of the two evils : either man will not meet the ends of the law of nature at all and waste his energy in fighting against it, or, overwhelmed by his instinctive demands, he will be compelled to satisfy his desires by unlawful, illicit ways.

Organization of Family

After making the sexual urge a means of the creation of the family and the stability thereof, Islam turns to consolidate the

family. Here also it keeps in view all the aspects of the laws of nature as mentioned above. The principles of justice and fairplay that Islam has adopted while determining the rights of the husband and the wife have been fully explained in my book, *The Rights of the Spouses.* If one goes through this book, one will find that Islam has succeeded in establishing all possible equality between the sexes. But it does not believe in the kind of equality that is opposed to the laws of nature. As human beings, women are the equals of men in their rights :

"Wives have the same rights as the husbands have on them".

But man being the active partner has been justly regarded by Islam as superior to woman :

"Of course, men are a degree above them (women)" (2 : 228).

Thus, taking into account the natural relations between the active and the passive partners, as exist between the man and the woman, Islam has organized the family on the following principles :

Man as Provider

Man's position in the family is that of a provider. In other words, he is in charge of the family, and its protector and is responsible for its conduct and affairs. It is obligatory on his wife and children to obey him, provided that it does not involve them in the disobedience of Allah and His Prophet. He is responsible for earning a living for the family and providing it with the necessities of life :

1. "Men are the governors of the affairs of women because Allah has made men superior to women and because men spend of their wealth on them". (4 : 34).
2. "Virtuous women are obedient, and guard their (husbands) rights carefully in their absence under the care and watch of Allah". (4 : 34)
3. "The man is the ruler over his wife and children, and is answerable to Allah for the conduct of their affairs". (*Al-Bukhāri*).
4. "When a woman steps out of her house against the will of her husband, she is cursed by every angel in the heavens and by everything other than men and jinn by which she

passes, till she returns". (*Kashf-al-Ghamma* by Sh'erāni).

5. "As for those women whose defiance you have reason to fear, admonish them and keep them apart from your beds and beat them. Then if they submit to you, do not look for pretences to punish them". (4 : 34).
6. "Do not obey the person who does not obey Allah". (*Reported by Ahmad*).
7. "None should be obeyed in the disobedience of Allah". (*Reported by Ahmad*).
8. "Obedience is obligatory only in what is good and lawful". (*Al-Bukhāri*)
9. "And We have exhorted man to show kindness to his parents. But if they order you to worship as god others than Me that of which you have no knowledge, do not obey them". (29 : 8)

So the family has been organized in such a way as to have a governor. The one who tries to disrupt the family discipline has been admonished by the Holy Prophet thus :

"One who tries to sow seeds of discord between a woman and her husband does not belong to us". (*Kashf-al-Ghamma* by Sh'erāni).

Woman's Sphere of Activity

In this organization the woman has been made queen of the house. Earning a living for the family is the responsibility of the husband, while her duty is to keep and run the house with his earnings.

"The woman is the ruler over the house of her husband, and she is answerable for the conduct of her duties". (*Al-Bukhāri*)

She has been exempted from all outdoor religious obligations. For instance, it is not obligatory on her to offer the *Jumu'ah* (weekly congregational) prayers. (*Abū Da'ūd*). It is also not obligatory on her to go for *Jihad*, though, if the occasion demands, she may go and serve the fighters in the cause of Allah. She is also not required to join the funeral prayer ; she has rather been forbidden to do so. (*Al-Bukhāri*). She has been exempted from attending the mosques and joining in congregational prayers. Though under

certain conditions she may visit the mosque, yet as a principle it has not been approved by the *Shari'ah*.

The woman has not been allowed to go on a journey except in company with a *mahram*.[1] (*Al-Tirmizi*). In short, Islam has not approved that a woman should move out of her house without a genuine need. The most appropriate place for her, according to the Islamic law, is her home. The *Quranic* verse, "Stay in your houses . . ."[2] clearly points to the commandment. But in this regard no

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1. A *mahram* (male) in respect of a woman is her father, or brother, or son, or any other relative with whom she cannot enter into matrimony.—Tr.

2. Some people say that this Commandment was only meant for the wives of the Holy Prophet, because the verse begins with: "O wives of the Prophet. . .' But the question is : Which of the instructions in the verse can be taken to be specifically meant only for the wives of the Holy Prophet ? The verse says :

> "If you fear Allah, do not be too complaisant in your speech, lest the lecherous-hearted should lust after you. Show discretion in what you say. Stay in your homes and do not display your finery as women used to do in the days of ignorance. Attend to your prayers, give alms to the poor, and obey Allah and His Apostle, ... Allah seeks only to remove uncleanness from you and to purify you". (33 : 32-33).

Now, one may ask, which of the instructions here is such as is not meant for the guidance of the common Muslim women also ? Should the Muslim women not try to become God-fearing and righteous ? Should they be soft of speech with strangers so as to allure them ? Should they go about displaying their finery as was done in the days of 'ignorance'? Should they abstain from offering prayers and paying *zakāt*, and disobey Allah and His Prophet ? Does Allah seek to keep them unclean ? If all these instructions are meant for all the Muslim women, why should "Stay in your homes . . ." only be taken to be specifically meant for the wives of the Holy Prophet ?

Most probably the misunderstanding arose on account of the words with which the verse begins: "Wives of the Prophet! you are not like other women". But, as the context clearly shows, it is just like addressing a child of a respectable family, saying, "You are not like other children that you should roam the streets and behave unbecomingly. You should always be decent". Such an observation is not intended to suggest that it is commendable for other children to roam about and behave indencently and that they are not required to conduct themselves like gentlemen. The object in fact is to establish a criterion of good etiquette, so that every child who wants to live like good children tries to attain this ideal. The *Qur'an* has adopted this way of instructing women for a specific purpose. In the pre-Islamic days the Arab women were as indisciplined and free as European

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restriction has been imposed, because sometimes it becomes really necessary for women to go out of their homes. For instance, a woman may have nobody to look after her, or she may have to go out for earning a living on account of the poverty, insufficient income, sickness, infirmity or such other handicaps afflicting the male protector of the family. For all such cases, the law has been made sufficiently flexible. The Holy Prophet has told women :

"Allah has permitted you to go out of your houses for genuine needs." (*Al-Bukhāri*).

But such a permission which has been granted under special circumstances and genuine needs cannot alter the basic principles of the Social System of Islam which restricts the woman's sphere of activity to her home. This permission indeed is a sort of concession which must per force be treated as such.

Restrictions for Women

An adult woman has been given sufficient freedom with regard to her personal affairs, yet her freedom is restricted as compared to that of an adult male. For instance, a man is free to undertake a journey at will, but a woman, whether she is married, unmarried or a widow, cannot travel unless she is accompanied by a *mahram* :

1. "It is unlawful for a woman who believes in Allah and the Last Day that she should travel for three days or more unaccompanied either by her father, or brother, or husband, or son, or some other male *mahram*".

Cont. from p. 146]
women are today. They were gradually being made used to the culture of Islam through the Holy Prophet, and for that purpose their undue freedom was being curbed by enjoining moral and social restrictions. Therefore to begin with, the life of the wives of the Holy Prophet was specially regulated so as to serve as model for other women living in the houses of the common Muslims. This is exactly the view that Allama Abu Bakr al-Jassas has expressed in his *Ahkam-al-Qur'an*. He writes :

> "This injunction, though revealed for the Holy Prophet and his wives, is meant to be for a general application. It is applicable to all the Muslims just as it was to the Holy Prophet, for the Muslims are his followers and all the injunctions revealed for his guidance are meant for our compliance, too. Those instructions, however, may be an exception which were specifically meant for his person". (Vol. III, p. 55).

2. According to Abū Hurairah, the Holy Prophet said : "A woman should not travel for a day and night, unless she is accompanied by a male *mahram*".
3. Again, according to Abū Hurairah, the Holy Prophet said :
"It is not lawful for any woman that she travels for a night, unless accompanied by a male *mahram*".

(*Abū Da'ūd*)

These traditions differ about the distance and duration of the journey. But that in fact indicates that the time taken in a journey is not important What is important is that a woman should not be given such freedom of moving alone as may land her in trouble. That is why the Holy Prophet has not specified the duration of the journey, but has mentioned different durations according to the requirements of the time and occasion.

Then man is entitled to full freedom in respect of his marriage. He can marry any woman, whether Muslim or Scriptuary, and can keep a slave-girl. But the woman is not wholly free in this regard. She cannot marry a non-Muslim.

"They are not lawful for the disbelievers, nor are the disbelievers lawful for them". (60 : 10).

She cannot have sexual relations with her slave. The *Qur'an* has allowed man to have sexual relations with his slave-girl, but the woman has not been given any such permission. During the time of Caliph 'Umar, a woman misinterpreted the verse, "whatever your right hands possess . . .", and had sexual relations with her slave. When the Caliph got the report, he put the case before the Central Advisory Council of the Companions. They all gave the unanimous verdict : "She misinterpreted the Book of Allah". Another woman asked Caliph 'Umar for permission to indulge in a similar act. He punished her severely and remarked :

"Arabia is secure till such time that her women are secure".

(*Kashf-al-Ghamma* by Sh'erāni).

The woman can choose her husband from among the free Muslim men. But in this regard also it is necessary that she should respect the opinion of her father, grandfather, brother or other guardians, though they have no right to give her away to somebody against her will. The Holy Prophet has said :

1. "A girl has a greater right to decide about herself than her guardian".
2. "Do not give an unmarried girl away unless she has consented".

But it is also not proper for a woman to marry anybody she pleases against the wish of the responsible people of her family. This is why the *Qur'an* has addressed males only on the question of marriage. For instance, while dealing with the marriage of males, it says :

"Do not marry idolatrous women".

"Marry them with the permission of their guardians".

Then, while laying down instructions for the marriage of women, it again addresses males :

"And marry such of you (from among women) as are single". (24 : 32).

"Wed not your women to idolaters until they believe". (2 : 221)

This shows that just as a married woman has to obey and be looked after by her husband, so an unmarried woman has to obey and be looked after by the responsible men of her family. But this dependence of her on others does not in any way deprive her of her freedom of action and will. It only implies that the responsibility of protecting the social system from chaos and disruption and of safeguarding the interests and morals of the family from internal and external mischiefs has been placed on the shoulders of man. In return for this, the woman has been made duty bound to obey the man who has to shoulder this responsibility, whether he is her husband, father, or brother.

WOMAN'S RIGHTS

Thus Islam, while recognizing the natural superiority of one partner over the other, has also specified that "men are a degree above women". It works on the foundation that the biological and psychological differences between the man and the woman do exist; it keeps those differences as they are; and it employs those differences for determining their place and responsibilities in the social system.

The next important question is of the woman's rights. In this

regard Islam has observed the following three guiding principles :

First, it enjoins that the authority that the man has been given for maintaining order in the family should not be abused, lest the relation between the ruler and the ruled turns into that of the master and his slave.

Second, it exhorts that the woman should be afforded all such opportunities as may enable her to develop her natural abilities to the maximum within the social framework, so that she may play her role effectively in the development of civilization.

Third, it makes it possible for the woman to attain to the highest rung of progress and advancement, as a woman. To become the man is none of her rights. It is neither good for her nor for the society to be trained for the masculine life, nor can she succeed in the manly life.

Keeping these principles in view, Islam has granted the woman vast social and economic rights, elevated her status, and provided such moral and legal safeguards in its system for the protection of her rights and status that the like of these cannot be found in any old or modern social system of the world.

Economic Rights

Man's economic stability is the foremost factor that gets him a status in society and through it he is able to maintain that status. All laws, except the law of Islam, have weakened the economic position of woman, and this economic helplessness is the chief factor that has reduced her to virtual slavery in the society. Europe wanted to change her condition, but the result was that she was made an earning hand like the man, which led to a still greater evil. Islam follows the *via media*. It grants the woman very extensive rights of inheritance. She gets her share of inheritance from her father, husband, offspring and other near relatives.[1] Besides, she is

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1. Her share in inheritance is half against that of the man. The reason is that she is entitled, by right, to obtain subsistence and nuptial money to which the man is not entitled. Supporting the woman is not obligatory only on her husband, but in case the husband is not there, it becomes obligatory on her father, brother, son or other guardians to support her. Thus, when the woman is not required to shoulder the responsibilities that the man has to shoulder, her share in inheritance should not be equal to his.

entitled to receive nuptial money from her husband. All the wealth that she thus receives is her own property and she possesses full proprietary rights over it without any right of interference by her father, husband, or any other relative. Then, if she invests her money in business, or earns with her own hand, she is the sole owner of the fruits of her labour. In spite of all this, her husband is under obligation to support her. However wealthy the wife may become, the husband is in no case absolved of his responsibility to support her. Thus, the economic position of the woman has become so secure in Islam that more often than not she is economically better off than the husband himself.

Social Rights

1. The woman has been granted full freedom in the choice of her husband. Nobody has got the right to give her away in marriage without her wish and consent. And if she marries a Muslim by her free choice, nobody can stop her from doing so. If, however, she selects a man who is not her equal in the family status, the elders reserve their right to object.

2. She has been given vast legal rights to obtain separation from a husband who is cruel, impotent or whom she abhors.

3. The husband has been instructed to use the authority granted him over the wife with discretion in a large-hearted and magnanimous manner. The *Qur'an* says :

> "Treat your women kindly" (4 : 19), and "Forget not magnanimity in your mutual dealings". (2 : 237)

The Holy Prophet said : "The best among you are those who are good to their wives and kind to their people".

Islam does not give only moral instructions. If the husband abuses his authority the wife reserves every right to have recourse to the law.

4. Widows and divorced women and all such women whose marriage has been annulled by law, or who have been legally separated from their husbands, have been granted an unfettered right to remarry. Their previous husbands, or any relatives, do not retain any right whatever over them. This is a right which women in most of the European and American countries have not yet been

able to get.

5. Absolute equality has been established between the man and the woman in so far as civil and penal laws are concerned. The Islamic law does not recognize any distinction between them in so far as protection of life and property, honour and reputation is concerned.

Female Education

Women have not only been allowed to obtain education in religious and mundane branches of knowledge, but their education and cultural training has been considered as important as that of men. Women also used to take lessons in religion and morality from the Holy Prophet along with men, though they had separate arrangements for the purpose. The wives of the Holy Prophet, especially Hazrat 'Ā'ishah, not only taught women, they taught men also. Many an illustrious Companion and follower of the Companions learnt the *Qur'an*, *Hadith* and Islamic Jurisprudence from Hazrat 'Ā'ishah. Besides educating free men and the nobility, the Holy Prophet had enjoined the Muslims to educate their slave-girls, too. A Tradition says :

> "If a person has a slave-girl, then he educates her liberally and trains her in the best manner and culture, then sets her free and marries her, he has a double reward (from his Lord)".
>
> (*Al-Bukhāri*).

This shows that in so far as the acquisition of knowledge and cultural training is concerned, Islam does not allow any distinction between man and woman. It, however, recognizes a difference in the type of education meant for the man and the woman respectively. From the Islamic point of view, the right sort of education for woman is that which prepares her to become a good wife, good mother and good housekeeper. Her sphere of activity is the home. Therefore, she should be trained primarily in those branches of knowledge which make her more useful in that sphere. Besides, she neeeds to be educated also in those sciences which help her become a good human being, morally as well as culturally, and which widen her outlook. Thus, it is obligatory for every Muslim woman to acquire knowledge and cultural training. If, however,

a woman possesses extraordinary abilities of the intellect, and is desirous of acquiring higher education in the other branches of knowledge as well, Islam does not stand in her way, provided that she does not transgress the limits prescribed for her by the *Shari'ah*.

Real Emancipation of Woman

These are briefly the rights of the woman granted by Islam. But the mere mention of these rights does not fully convey the idea of how highly has Islam honoured the woman and elevated her status in society. The history of human civilization bears evidence that woman was regarded as an embodiment of depravity, shame and sin in the world. The birth of a daughter so embarrassed a father that he could not raise his head for shame. The in-law relations were looked upon as base, mean and disgraceful. For this reason, the inhuman custom of disposing of daughters by killing them had become common among many nations.[1] Besides the illiterate, ignorant people, the learned scholars and religious leaders also disputed for generations the question whether woman was a human being, and whether God had granted her a soul. In Hinduism, the woman stood debarred from being educated in the Vedas. Buddhism did not recognize salvation for the one having sex relations with the woman. Christianity and Judaism looked upon woman as the source of all evil committed by man in the world. In Greece, the housewives were neither entitled to receive any education, nor training in culture, nor social rights. Only the prostitute was entitled to all these blessings ! The condition in Rome, Iran, China, Egypt and other centres of human civilization was not any different. Centuries of inhuman treatment and universal contempt meted out to the woman had disgraced her in her own eyes. She herself had developed the mentality that she had no right and was not entitled to any place of honour in the world. The man considered himself

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1. The *Qur'an* has described this mentality of 'ignorance' in its own eloquent style :

"When the birth of a girl is announced to one of them, his face grows dark and he is filled with inward gloom. ecause of the bad news he hides himself from men, and wonders whether he should keep her with disgrace or bury her under the earth". (16 : 58).

to be perfectly within his right to treat her harshly, and she endured all this as part of her natural obligations. She had become slavish and prided herself on being called the "maid" of her husband ; her religion was to extol and worship him as her god and lord.

It is Islam which revolutionized this state of affairs not only legally and practically but also intellectually. Islam has indeed changed the mentalities of both the man and the woman. The concept of giving the woman her rights and a place of honour in society has in fact been created in man's mind by Islam. The slogans of women's rights, women's education and women's emancipation that one so often hears these days are in fact an echo of the revolutionary call raised by the Holy Prophet of Islam (peace be upon him) who changed man's ways of thinking for all times to come. It was the Prophet of Islam who first taught the world that woman is as much a human being as man.

> "Allah created you of a single soul, and from the same soul created his mate". (4 : 1).
>
> God does not distinguish between the man and the woman :
> "The men shall have their due share according to what they have earned and the women according to what they have earned". (4 : 32)

The high places of honour and distinction that man can attain by virtue of his faith and righteous deeds are also attainable by woman. If a man can become Ibrahim bin Adham, nothing can prevent a woman from becoming Rābi'ah Basriah.

> "Their Lord answered their prayer (and said): "I never let go to waste the labour of any one that works among you, whether male or female, for in My sight all of you are alike". (3 : 195).
>
> "And those who do good works, whether men or women, provided that they are Believers, will enter into Paradise and they will not be deprived in the least of their rightful rewards". (4 : 124).

Then it was the Holy Prophet of Islam who warned the man and infused the feeling in the woman that she had the same rights on him as he had upon her.

> "Wives have the same rights as the husbands have on them in accordance with the well-known principles". (2 : 228).

Again, it was the Holy Prophet of Islam who raised the woman from disgrace and shame to the place of honour and dignity. He told the father that the birth of a daughter did not bring him any shame; bringing her up and educating her was rather a means of his salvation.

1. "The man who brought up two daughters, so that they attained maturity, will appear at my side on the Day of Judgement as are my two adjacent fingers". (*Muslim*).
2. "A man of whom only daughters are born, and he brings them up properly, the same daughters will become a covering for him against Hell". (*Muslim*).
3. "The best blessing among the blessings of the world to a man is a virtuous wife". (*Nasā'i*).
4. "Two things in the world please me the most : the woman and the perfume ; and in *salāt* is the solace of my eyes". (*Nasā'i*).
5. "Nothing among the choicest blessings of this world is better than a virtuous wife". (*Ibn-i-Mājah*).

The Prophet of Islam taught the son that the one who most deserved his respect, veneration and kind treatment after Allah and His Prophet, was his mother :

"A man asked: 'O Prophet of Allah, who deserves to be treated well by me most of all?' The Prophet said : 'Your mother'. He asked : 'Who then?' The Prophet said : 'Your mother'. He asked : 'Who then?' The Prophet said : 'Your mother'. He asked : 'Who then?' The Prophet said : 'Then your father'." (*Al-Bukhāri*).

"Allah has forbidden you to disobey your mothers and deprive them of their rights". (*Al-Bukhāri*).

Again, it was the Holy Prophet who pointed out that woman is by nature emotional and sensitive and inclined to extremes. She has been created by Allah with that nature and this is her merit, not her demerit. This trait of her character can be usefully employed in the service of humanity. But if the man tried to straighten and harden her like himself he would break her instead.

"The woman is like a rib. If you try to straighten her. you would break her. But if you employed her usefully, you would

benefit from her in spite of her crookendness". (*Al-Bukhārī*).

Likewise, the Holy Prophet of Islam was the first, and indeed the last, man who not only changed the mentality of man about woman but also of the woman herself, and created the right type of mentality based not on emotions but on real knowledge and reason in place of the un-Godly, un-Islamic mentality of 'ignorance'. Then he did not rest content with reforming the people spiritually but also made arrangements to safeguard by law the rights of woman against the encroachments of man. Moreover, he produced this awakening in the woman that she had her own legal rights for the protection of which she could go to the law.

The women had found such a merciful, sympathetic and strong supporter of their rights in the person of the Holy Prophet that they would freely approach him with all sorts of complaints against bad treatment of their husbands. The men, on the contrary, were cautious and careful not to give their wives any chance to complain against them to the Holy Prophet. 'Abdullah bin 'Umar has reported that during the lifetime of the Holy Prophet the Companions treated their wives most politely for fear that a commandment concerning them might be sent down, and not until he had passed away they began talking with them freely. (*Al-Bukhārī*).

According to a Tradition contained in the Collection by Ibn-i-Mājah, the Holy Prophet had forbidden maltreatment of women. Once Hazrat 'Umar commained that the women had grown insolent and sought permission to have resort to beating to set them right. The Prophet granted the permission. The same day seventy women were beaten in their houses by the husbands who had long been awaiting such a permission. The next day all the women thronged the Holy Prophet's house with bitter complaints. The Prophet called the people together and addressed them thus :

> "Today seventy women have visited the people of Muḥammad's house complaining against the harsh treatment of their husbands. The men who have misbehaved in that manner are certainly not the best among you".

The effect of this moral and legal reform was that the woman attained such a high status in the Islamic society that it has no precedent in history. The Muslim woman indeed has the right to

attain the highest place of honour and advancement materially, intellectually and spiritually, both in religious and mundane spheres open to the Muslim male. Her sex does not stand in her way at any stage. The world of today, even in this 20th century, falls far short of this Islamic standard. Human intellectual development has not so far touched the mark set by Islam. Whatever rights the woman has been granted in the West have been granted her not for her own sake but as if she was the man. The woman is still inferior in the Western eyes as she was in the past ages of ignorance. In the West a real genuine woman has yet to have respect as the queen of a home, the wife of a husband, the matron of children. The so-called respect that she enjoys today is in fact for her being the he-woman or the she-man who is physiologically a woman, but mentally a man, and who pursues masculine activities in life. Obviously, this respect is for manhood, not for womanhood. Another manifestation of the female inferiority complex is that the Western woman fondly puts on the male dress, whereas no man can even think of putting on the female dress in public. To be the wife is disgraceful for hundreds of thousands of Western women, but to be the husband is not disgraceful for any man. Women feel honoured when engaged in manly jobs, whereas no man feels inclined for the rearing of children and housekeeping, which are purely womanly duties. It can, therefore, be said without fear of contradiction that the West has not honoured the woman because she is the woman. This was done by Islam alone which accorded woman the place of pride in her own natural sphere in society and civilization, and thus raised the status of womanhood in the real sense. The Islamic civilization segregates men and women and employs them respectively for the purposes Nature has created them for, affording them equal opportunities of attaining success and honour and progress in their own natural spheres. It regards both womanhood and manhood as two equally necessary components of humanity. Both are equally important for the development of civilization. The services rendered by both in their respective spheres are equally useful and valuable. Neither manhood is respectable nor womanhood disgraceful. Just as a man will attain respect and progress and success if he remains the man and performs the duties of the man, so a woman will attain

respect and progress and success if she remains the woman and performs the duties of the woman. A righteous civilization would be that which grants the woman all the human rights in her own natural sphere, which gives her a place of pride in society, and which develops her latent abilities and opens new vistas of progress and success before her own sphere of activity.

CHAPTER 12

Social System of Islam—III

SAFEGUARDS

THIS was an outline of the Social System of Islam. Before we proceed further, let us again have a look at the main features of this System :

1. The object of this system is to keep the social environment as clean as possible of all sorts of sexual excitements and stimulations, so as to enable man to develop his physical and mental abilities in a pure and peaceful atmosphere, so that he may play his role effectively in the building up of civilization with conserved energies.

2. Sex relations should be restricted to marriage only. Not only should sexual lawlessness outside marriage be curbed, but as far as possible dispersion of sexual ideas should also be controlled.

3. Woman's sphere of activity should be segregated from that of man's. They should be entrusted with separate responsibilities in the social life according to their respective natures and mental and physical abilities. And their mutual relationships should be so organized that they co-operate with each other within the lawful limits, and do not transgress these limits to interfere with the duties of the opposite sex.

4. Man should have the position of a governor in the family and the rest of the members in the family should obey him.

5. Both man and woman should be given all the human rights, and both should be provided with all possible opportunities for advancement, but neither should be allowed to transgress the limits prescribed for his or her sex in the society.

The Social System which is built on these bases needs to be strengthened by a few safeguards also, so that it is able to function with all its potentialities. Islam has provided three kinds of such safeguards :

1. Self-purification,

2. Punitive Laws, and
3. Preventive Measures.

These safeguards have been provided in accordance with the true spirit and objectives of the Social System, and they all together help it function effectively.

By the process of self-purification man is so educated and trained that he automatically begins following and obeying the system, whether there is or is not an external force to compel him for obedience.

The punitive laws prevent the commission of all such crimes as may disintegrate the system or destroy any of its bases.

The preventive measures help organize social life in such a manner that it is automatically safeguarded against all sorts of unnatural excitement and artificial stimulation, and thus, the possibilities of sexual anarchy are reduced to the minimum. Those people who are not reformed spiritually and who are not scared of the penal laws can be thwarted only by the preventive measures. These measures raise such barriers in their way that despite their inclination towards sexual lawlessness it becomes really difficult for them to commit the act practically. Moreover, it is these measures which practically segregate the male and the female spheres of activity, which make the family system function on the truly Islamic pattern, and which safeguard the bounds prescribed by Islam for the preservation of the distinction between the lives of the men and women.

SELF-PURIFICATION

A sound faith in Islam is the basic factor which requires its followers to obey the laws of its system. A person who believes in Allah, His Book and His Prophet is the one for whose compliance the *Shari'ah* enjoins its injunctions. For the sake of one's personal guidance it is enough for one to know that a certain command is a Command of Allah and that a certain prohibition is a prohibition by Him. Therefore, when a believer comes to know from the Book of Allah that He forbids indulgence in obscenity and sexual promiscuity, his faith requires that he should not only abstain from

indulging in it practically but also keep his heart clean of all inclinations towards it. Similarly when a Muslim woman comes to know that Allah and His Prophet have given her a particular position in the social system she is required by her faith to accept that position willingly and remain satisfied with it. Just as in the other spheres of life, the correct and complete obedience to the Islamic injunctions rests on one's faith in Islam, so it is in the moral and social sphere as well. That is why man has first been invited to believe in Islam and have a sound faith in it, and then given moral and social instructions for his guidance in life.

This scheme for spiritual reform underlies not only the moral theory but the whole System of Islam. In the moral sphere Islam has adopted a highly practicable and sound process of educating its followers, and we now briefly describe it in the following pages.

Haya (حیاء)

As pointed out above, adultery, theft, lying, and all other sins which man commits under the impulse of his animal nature, run counter to his human nature. All such acts have been described by the *Qur'an* by the comprehensive word *munkar* (منکر), which is "unknown or little known" in its literal sense. These acts have been called *munkar* because they are unknown and repugnant to human nature. Obviously, when they are against human nature and man commits them under the impulse of his animality, there must be in the human nature itself something which prevents man from approaching these sins. The Divine Law-Giver has specified this thing. It is *Hayā*.

Literally, *Hayā* means shyness. As an Islamic term, *Hayā* implies that shyness which a wrongdoer feels before his own nature and before his God. This shyness is the force which prevents man from indulging in indecency and obscenity. If, however, he commits a sin under the impulse of his animal nature, the same shyness makes him feel the pangs of conscience. The moral teachings of Islam aim at awakening this dormant feeling of shyness in human nature and try to develop it as a part of man's mental make-up, so that it may serve as a strong moral deterrent against all evil inclinations. This exactly is the explanation of the *Hadīth* which says :

"Every religion has a morality, and the morality of Islam is *Hayā*".

Another *Hadith* touches on the same subject. The Holy Prophet said :

"When you do not have *Hayā*, you may do whatever you please". For when a person does not have the deterrent of *Hayā* in him, his desires which spring from his animal instinct will lay complete hold of him and he will not hesitate to indulge in any sin.

The feeling of *Hayā* is inherent in man though in a crude form. It abhors all sins by nature, but it lacks knowledge. Therefore, it does not know exactly why it abhors a particular sin. This lack of knowledge gradually weakens its feeling of abhorrence with the result that man begins committing sin under the impulse of his animality, and the repeated commission of sins at last destroys his sense of modesty altogether. The moral teachings of Islam aim to educate *Hayā*. It not only acquaints it with the manifest sins, but also lays bare before it all the evils of desire and intention hidden in the innermost heart of man. Thus, it warns it of all possible mischiefs of the evil spirit, so that it may abhor them consciously and with conviction. Then the moral training further sharpens the sensitivity of the "educated" *Hayā* with the result that it is enabled to detect even the slightest inclination of the mind towards evil and sin. So much so that it does not let go unwarned even the most minor lapse on the part of one's intention and desire.

The sphere of *Hayā* in the Islamic morality is so vast that it encompasses all aspects of human life. Thus, the aspect of man's social life which is related to sex has also been reformed by Islam by means of *Hayā*. Islam detects even the slightest lapses of the human self in sexual affairs and warns *Hayā* of their presence and exhorts it to be vigilant. It is not possible to go into details, but a few illustrations are necessary.

Hidden Motives

In the eyes of law, adultery implies physical union only, but from the moral point of view every evil inclination towards a member of the opposite sex outside marriage amounts to adultery. Thus, enjoying the beauty of the other woman with the eyes, relishing the

sweetness of her voice with the ears, drawing pleasure of the tongue by conversing with her, and turning of the feet over and over again to visit her street, all are the preliminaries of adultery, nay, adultery itself. Law cannot have jurisdiction over such an act, for it springs from the hidden motives of man. It can only be detected by his own conscience. The Holy Prophet has elucidated this point as follows :

> "Eyes commit adultery, and their adultery is the evil look: hands commit adultery, and their adultery is the use of violence; feet commit adultery, and their adultery is moving towards sin; the adultery of the tongue is (lustful) talk; and the adultery of the heart is the evil desire. In the end, the sexual organs either confirm all this (by their action) or disapprove it".

The Evil Look

The evil look is the worst culprit in this regard. Therefore, both the *Qur'an* and *Hadith* have pointed it out first of all. The *Qur'an* says :

> "(O Prophet), tell the believing men to restrain their eyes (from looking at the other women) and guard their shameful parts; this is a pure way for them; surely, Allah knows full well what they do. And (O Prophet) tell the believing women to restrain their eyes (from looking at the other men) and guard their shameful parts". (24 : 30-31).

The Holy Prophet says :

> "Son of Adam, your first (unintentional) look is pardonable. But beware that you do not cast the second look". (*Al-Jassās*).

He said to Hazrat 'Ali :

> "O 'Ali, do not cast a second look after the first one. The first look is pardonable, but not the second". (*Abū Da'ūd*).

Hazrat Jabir asked the Prophet what he should do if he happened to cast a look by chance. The Prophet instructed him that he should turn his eyes away forthwith. (*Abu Da'ūd*).

Urge for Display

The feminine urge for the display of beauty is another evil which is linked up with the evil look. This urge is not always pro-

minent, it is generally hidden in the depths of the heart. It often finds expression in the selection of pleasing, gauzy and bright clothes, fancy hairdos and such other apparently insignificant aspects of the female behaviour as cannot be enumerated. The *Qur'an* has comprehensively termed them all as *Tabarruj-i-Jahiliyyah* (تبرج جاهلیہ). All beautification and make-up which is meant to please and entertain others than the husband is *Tabarruj-iJahiliyyah*. Even if a pretty and bright veil is put on so as to appear attractive and pleasing to the eyes, it is *Tabarruj-i-Jahiliyyah*. No law can be made to check and control this tendency, as it springs from the woman's own heart. She herself can only search her heart to detect any hidden evil desire. If it is there it has to be eradicated according to the following Divine Commandment :

> " . .. and do not go about displaying your fineries as women used to do in the days of ignorance . .. " (33 : 33).

Only that decoration is Islamic which is free from the element of the evil motive. But as soon as it is corrupted by the evil motive it becomes un-Islamic.

The Voice

The voice is another agent of the evil spirit. There are countless mischiefs which are caused and spread by the voice. A man and a woman may apparently be absorbed in innocent talk, but the hidden motive of the heart is at work : it is rendering the voice more and more sweet, and the accent and the words more and more appealing. The *Qur'an* detects this hidden motive :

> " . . . if you are Godfearing, do not talk in a soft voice, lest the man of the unhealthy heart should cherish false hopes from you. If you have to speak (to the other men), speak in an unaffected way (as people ordinarily do)". (33 : 32).

It is the same evil desire which finds pleasure and satisfaction in relating or listening to stories about other people's lawful and unlawful sex relations. To satisfy the same urge, lyrical poetry is written and imaginary love romances described which take the people's fancy and spread in society like wild fire. The *Qur'an* admonishes man about this also.

"Those people who desire to spread indecency and obscenity

among the Believers have a grievous torment in store for them in this world and in the Hereafter". (**24** : 19).

The mischief caused by the voice has many other aspects and in each aspect there is one or the other evil motive at work. Islam has detected all these motives and warned man to beware of them. For instance, a woman is not allowed to describe the features of other women before her husband :

"A woman should not have too close an intimacy with another woman, lest she should describe her before her husband in a manner as if he himself saw her". (*Al-Tirmizi*).

Both man and woman have been forbidden to describe their secret sex affairs before other people, because this also causes indecency to spread by creating evil desire in the hearts. (*Abū Da'ūd*).

If the *Imām* commits a mistake in the congregational prayer, or he is to be warned of some lapse, men have been taught to say *Subhān Allah* (Allah be glorified), while women have been commanded to tap their hands only. (*Abū Da'ūd*).

The Sound

Sometimes attention is attracted not by the word of mouth but by some other device. Such devices also spring from the evil motive and Islam disapproves of them all :

" . . . and they should not stamp the ground in walking, so as to reveal their hidden decoration (ornaments, etc., by their jingle)." (**24** : 31).

The Perfume

The perfume also acts as a messenger between two evil spirits. This is the finest and most subtle means of communication which may be trivial in the eyes of others but the Islamic *Hayā* is too sensitive to let it slip undetected. It does not allow a Muslim woman to wear scented clothes and pass on the ways or sit in gatherings, for even if her beauty and make-up are hidden, her perfume is spreading about and causing emotional stimulation. The Holy Prophet said :

"The woman who uses perfume and passes through the people is promiscuous". (*Al-Tirmizi*).

2. "When a woman from among you wants to go to the mosque, she should not use perfume". (*Mu'attā and Muslim*).
3. "Males should use that perfume which does not give colour but has a strong smell : and the females should use that perfume which gives colour but has a light smell". (*Abū Da'ūd*).

Nudity

Islam has given such a correct and psychological interpretation of the sense of modesty in respect of covering the shameful parts of man's body as has no parallel in any civilization. For instance, the men and women of the most civilized nations in the world today do not feel any hesitation to uncover any part of their bodies. For them the dress is a means of decoration and not of covering one's nakedness. But from the Islamic point of view, covering of the shameful parts is more important than mere decoration. Islam enjoins its followers, both male and female, to cover all those parts of their bodies which have attraction for the opposite sex. That is why nudity is an indecency which can never be tolerated by the Islamic *Hayā*. Not to speak of others, Islam does not approve that even a husband and his wife should expose their shameful parts before each other. The Holy Prophet says :

1. "When one of you goes to his wife, he should mind his shameful parts. They should not both strip their clothes off their bodies and become naked like donkeys". (*Ibn Mājah*).
2. Hazrat 'Ā'ishah says that she never saw the Holy Prophet naked. (*Al-Tirmizi*)

Over and above all this, the Islamic *Hayā* does not approve that one should strip oneself naked even when alone, for "Allah has a greater right that one should observe *Hayā* before Him". (*Al-Tirmizi*).

The Holy Prophet says :

"Mind, you never be naked, for you are being attended by the angels of God who never leave you alone, except at the time when you have to attend to the call of nature or when you go to your wives. Therefore you should feel ashamed of them and

have regard for them". (*Al-Tirmizi*).

According to Islam, the dress which shows the body and reveals the shameful parts is no dress at all. The Holy Prophet said :

"Those women who remain naked even after wearing clothes, allure others and are allured by others, and walk coquettishly with the head turned to one side, will never enter Paradise, nor even get its scent". (*Muslim*).

It is not possible to treat the subject in an exhaustive manner here. A few instances that we have presented above are meant to give an idea of the standard and spirit of Islamic morality. As must have become clear by now, Islam aims to cleanse the society of all kinds of excitements that may lead to indecency and obscenity. All these feelings arise from man's inner self which is the breeding place for the germs of indecency and obscenity and wherefrom spring motives which though trivial on the surface lead to great iniquities in the long run. The ignorant people regard them lightly, and so overlook them, but the wise know that they are indeed the real cause of all moral and social ailments that afflict a civilization and bring it to ruin. Therefore, the moral teaching of Islam aims to create a strong feeling of *Hayā* in the inner self of man himself with a view to enabling him to censor the doings of his self and eradicate by his own will even its slightest inclination towards evil.

PUNITIVE LAWS

The basic principle of the punitive law of Islam is that unless a person practically commits a crime leading to disruption of the social system, he should not be proceeded against legally. But when he has actually committed such a crime, it is not proper and advisable to make him a habitual offender by awarding light punishments. Therefore, on the one hand, the Islamic Law requires extremely strict conditions[1] for establishing the crime so as to

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1. In the Islamic Law of Evidence, conditions to establish the crime are on the whole very strict, but the conditions required to establish fornication are the strictest. To establish this crime the Law requires at least four witnesses as against two in the case of all other crimes.

protect people against its application[1]. But, on the other, as soon as the crime is established, it inflicts such a heavy punishment on the culprit as not only disables him to repeat the crime but also deters thousands of others who might be inclined towards it. Indeed the object of the law is to cleanse the society of crimes and not to encourage the people instead to commit crimes and go on receiving punishments over and over again.

In order to protect the Social System, the Penal Law of Islam holds only two offences as punishable : (*a*) Fornication, and (*b*) Calumny.

Punishment for Fornication

As pointed out above, fornication is morally the most heinous crime that a person can commit. The one who commits it in fact proves that his humanity has been overwhelmed by his animality, and he is not fit to live as a virtuous member of the human society. From the social point of view it is one of those horrible crimes which cut at the very root of human civilization. Therefore, Islam has held fornication as a punishable offence for its own sake, whether it is accompanied by some other offence as the use of violence or encroachment upon somebody else's legal rights, or not. The *Qur'an* says :

> "The fornicators shall each be given a hundred lashes, and let not compassion for them keep you from carrying out the sentence of the Divine Law, if you truly believe in Allah and the Last Day. And let a number of the Muslims witness their chastisement". (24 : 2).

In this matter, the Islamic Law differs radically from the Western law. The Western law does not hold fornication by itself as a crime; it becomes a crime only when it is committed forcibly, or with a married woman. In other words, according to the Western law fornication by itself is no crime ; the real crime is rape, or the act of encroachment on the rights of the husband. In contrast to

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1. The Holy Prophet said : "Protect the Muslims as far as possible against the application of the Law. Let the culprit off if he can possibly be let off. For the *Imam's* making a mistake in forgiving is better than his making a mistake in applying the Law". (*Al-Tirmizi*).

this , the Islamic Law looks upon fornication by itself as a crime, and regards rape or the act of encroachment as additional crimes. This basic difference between view-points of the two systems of law gives rise to the difference in the punishment of the offence. In case of rape, the Western law rests content with the sentence of imprisonment only ; in case of fornication with a married woman it requires the fornicator to pay compensation to the husband. This punishment cannot act as a deterrent, it rather encourages the people. That is why fornication is on the increase in the countries where this law is in force. In contrast to this, the Islamic Law punishes fornication and adultery so severely that the society is automatically cleansed of this crime for a long time. That is why it has never become common in the countries where the Islamic punishment for it is inflicted. Once the *Shari'ah* punishment is carried out, it so terrifies the whole population that no one can dare commit it for years to come. In a way it performs a psychological operation on the minds of those having criminal tendencies, and this reforms them automatically.

The Western people abhor the infliction of a hundred lashes. This is not because they dislike the idea of physical torture. It is because their moral sense has not yet fully developed. At first they regarded fornication as something indecent ; now they look upon it as a fun, as a pastime, which amuses two persons for a little while. Therefore, they want that the law should tolerate this act, and should not regard it seriously unless the fornicator encroaches upon somebody else's freedom or legal rights. Even in case of such an encroachment they regard it as a crime affecting the rights of one person only. Hence, they think that a light sentence or payment of compensation is sufficient punishment for the crime.

Obviously, a person who holds such a view about fornication will look upon a hundred lashes for it as a cruel punishment. But if his moral and social sense had developed, he would realize that fornication, whether it is committed with willingness or force, and whether with a married woman or with an unmarried one, is in each case a social crime that affects the whole society. This will naturally make him modify his view about punishment, so that the society is saved from the ill-effects of fornication. He will have

to admit that since the motives leading to fornication lie deep in the animal nature of man and since they cannot be eradicated by mere imprisonment or inflicting of penalties, strict measures have to be adopted for their complete eradication. For it is better to subject one or a couple of persons to severe physical torture for the purpose of safeguarding hundreds of thousands of people against countless moral and sociological evils than to inflict light punishments on the criminals and so jeopardise the well-being of not only the society but also of the coming generations.

There is another reason for regarding the infliction of a hundred lashes as cruel. As pointed out above, the Western civilization emerged as a result of the urge of favouring the individual against the society, and it has been built up on an exaggerated notion of the rights of the individual. Therefore, even if an individual harms the society to his heart's content, the Western people do not feel ill at ease ; they rather put up with it willingly in most cases. But when the individual is proceeded against with a view to protecting the rights of society, they shudder with horror and all their sympathies go with the individual as against society. Moreover, like all ignorant people, the Western people also have the special characteristic of regarding feelings as more important than reason. Therefore, when they see the individual, as a particular case, being severely dealt with, they feel outraged at the sight of his suffering. But they do not seem to comprehend the far-reaching consequenees of the damage that is done to society and the coming generations, too.

Puinshment for Calumny

The evil caused by calumny is similar to that caused by fornication itself. Accusing a lady of fornication not only damages her reputation but also it creates bad blood between the families. It renders parentage doubtful, spoils conjugal relations and ruins the mental peace of scores of other people also for years to come. Therefore the *Qur'an* has enjoined severe punishment for this offence as well :

> "As for those who accuse virtuous women (of fornication) and then do not bring four witnesses as a proof thereof, give them each eighty lashes, and do not accept their evidence in future : they themselves are the fornicators". (24 : 4).

PREVENTIVE MEASURES

Thus, on the one hand, the punitive law of Islam curbs fornication and adultery by force, and on the other, it protects the righteous element of society against calumny. Whereas the moral teachings of Islam cleanse man from within so that he does not feel inclined towards sin, its punitive law regulates his external behaviour so that in case his moral training remained defective, his evil inclinations taking practical shape may be suppressed by force. Besides these, certain other measures have also been adopted to reform the self. These measures have been so employed in reforming the social system that the weaknesses of the individual on account of his defective moral training may not develop into practical action. They aim to create a social environment that is unfavourable for the development of evil inclinations and emotional disturbances. Thus they help to weaken factors leading to sexual anarchy and eradicate all forms of indecency that might land the social system in confusion.

Now we shall consider these measures one by one and deal with them at length.

Injunctions for Clothing and Covering of Nakedness

In this regard, Islam has first of all eradicated nudity and specified shameful parts which the males and the females have to cover. As regards dress, the conduct of the so-called civilized nations of today is not any different from that of the Arabs of the pre-Islamic period. The Arabs would freely strip themselves naked before each other.[1] Even while having bath and attending to the call of nature they did not bother to have a covering. So much so that they performed the ceremony of moving round the Ka'abah in

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1. According to a *Hadith*, Hazrat Miswar bin Makhramah was carrying a stone towards the Holy Prophet when the garment covering the lower part of his body fell down on the way. He did not care and carried on with the load. When the Holy Prophet saw him, he told him to go back and cover his body and refrain from moving naked in future. (*Muslim*).

a naked state, and considered it as an essential part of the worship.[1] More than that, the women would perform this ceremony in perfect nakedness.[2] The dress they wore was such as left a part of their breasts, arms, back and shins uncovered.[3] Almost similar are the conditions prevalent in Europe, America and Japan in respect of dress these days. In the Eastern countries also there is no other social system which may have specified the bounds of nakedness. Islam alone has taught man the first lessons of civilization in this regard. The *Qur'an* says :

> "O Children of Adam ! We have sent down to you clothing in order to cover the shameful parts of your body, and to serve as protection and decoration". (7 : 26).

According to this verse, covering of the body has been made obligatory for every male and female. The Holy Prophet gave strict orders to the effect that no person should appear naked before any other person :

1. "Accursed is the one who casts a look at the shameful parts of his brother". (*Ahkām-al-Qur'an* by al-Jassās).
2. "No man should look at a naked man and no woman should look at a naked woman". (*Muslim*).
3. "By God, it is better for me to be dropped from the skies and torn in two than that I should look at the shameful parts of somebody or that somebody should look at my shameful parts". (*Al-Mabsūt*).
4. "Beware, never strip yourslf of clothes, for with you is the One Who never leaves you alone, except at the time when you attend to the call of nature or have intercourse". (*Al-Tirmizi*).
5. "When one of you goes to his wife, he should cover his nakedness even at that time ; he should not make himself

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1. Ibn 'Abbās, Mujāhid, Tā'ūs and Zuhri have related that people used to perform the ceremony of moving round the Ka'abah in the naked state.

2. This custom has been described in the Collection of *Hadith* by Muslim : A woman would move round the Ka'abah in a naked state, and then would say to those present, "Who will give me a garment with which I may cover my body ?" To meet such a request from a woman was considered to be an act of charity.

3. See *Tafsīr-i-Kabīr*, commentary on v. 31 of Sūrah An-Nūr (24).

naked like donkeys" (*Ibn Mājah*).

According to another Tradition, once the Holy Prophet went to the pasture meant for the camels of *Zakāt*, and saw that the camel-herd was lying naked on the ground. The Holy Prophet ordered his removal forthwith, and said :

"We have no use for a person who is shameless".

Boundaries of *Satar* (ستر) for Males

Besides these general instructions, Islam has also specified those parts of the body which the males and the females must cover. Such a part as is obligatory to cover is termed as *satar* by the *Shari'ah*. For the males, the *satar* is the part of the body between the navel and the knee, and it has been enjoined that one should neither uncover this part before another person, nor should one look at this part of anybody else :

1. "Whatever is above the knee should be covered, and whatever is below the navel should be covered". (*Dārqutnī*).
2. "The male should cover that part of his body which is between the navel and the knee". (*Al-Mabsūt*).
3. Hazrat 'Ali bin Abī Tālib has reported that the Holy Prophet said : "Do not uncover your thigh before another person, nor look at the thigh of a living or a dead person". (*Tafsīr-i-Kabīr*).

This is a general command which excludes none but the wives. The Holy Prophet says :

"Guard your *satar* from all except your wives and your slave-girls". (*Ahkam-al-Qur'ān*, Vol. III, p. 37).

Boundaries of *Satar* for Females

The bounds of *satar* for the females are wider. They have been enjoined to cover their whole body except the face and the hands from all people, including father, brother and all male relatives, and excluding none but the husband. The Holy Prophet said :

1. "It is not lawful for any woman who believes in Allah and the last Day that she should uncover her hand more than this"—and then he placed his hand on his wrist joint (*Ibn Jarīr*)

2. "When a woman attains maturity no part of her body should remain uncovered except her face and the hand up to the wrist joint". (*Abū Da'ūd*).
3. Hazrat 'Ā'ishah says that she appeared before her nephew, 'Abdullah bin al-Tufail, with decorations. The Holy Prophet did not approve of it. I said, "O Apostle of Allah, he is my nephew". The Holy Prophet replied : "When a woman attains maturity it is not lawful for her to uncover any part of her body except the face and this"—and then he put his hand on his wrist joint so as to leave only a little space between the place he gripped and the palm. (*Ibn Mājah*).
4. Hazrat Asmā', daughter of Abū Bakr, who was the Holy Prophet's sister-in-law, came before him in thin dress that showed her body. The Holy Prophet turned his eyes away and said : "O Asmā', when a woman attains maturity, it is not lawful that any part of her body be seen, except this and this"—and then he pointed to his face and the palms of his hands. (*Takmilah*, *Fath-al-Qadīr*).
5. Hafsah, daughter of 'Abdur Rahmān, came before Hazrat 'Ā'ishah and she was wearing a thin wrapper over her head and shoulders. Hazrat 'Ā'ishah tore it up to pieces and put a thick wrapper over her. (*Mu'attā*, *Imām Mālik*).
6. The Holy Prophet said ; "Allah has cursed those women who wear clothes and still remain naked".
7. Hazrat 'Umar says, "Do not clothe your women in such clothes as are tight fitting and reveal all the outlines of the body". (*Al-Mabsūt*).

All these traditions show that except for the face and the hands the whole female body is included in *satar* which a woman must conceal in her house even from the nearest relatives. She cannot expose her *satar* before anybody including her father, brother or nephew, except her husband, and she cannot wear a dress that shows her *satar*.

All the commandments in this regard are meant for the young women. They become applicable as soon as a woman attains

maturity and remain in force for her until she loses all sexual attraction. At this age the severity of the commandments is also relaxed. The Qur'an says :

> "There is no harm if the old women who have no hope of marriage lay aside their over-garments, provided that they do not mean to display their decoration. But if they abstain from this, it is better for them . . ." (24 : 59).

Here the reason for relaxation has been clearly mentioned. ". . . who have no hope of marriage" implies the age at which sexual inclinations die out, and sexual attraction also disappears. Nevertheless, the condition that "they do not mean to display their decoration" has been imposed as a safeguard. That is, if an old woman has a sexual desire hidden in her heart, it is not lawful for her to put away the over-garment. The relaxation is meant only for those old women whose advanced age has rendered them careless of the restrictions of the dress, and who cannot possibly be looked at except with respect and reverence. Such women are allowed to go about in their houses without the over-garment.

Regulations for Entrance

The next restriction imposed by Islam is that the male members are forbidden to enter the house without alerting the female members, so that they do not see them in a condition in which they should not normally see them. The Qur'an enjoins :

> "When your children attain puberty, they should ask leave before entering the house, just as their elders asked it before them. . . ." (24 : 58).

Here the reason for the commandment has also been stated. The need to ask permission arises at the age of puberty, when the feeling of sex becomes active. It is not, therefore, necessary to ask permission before attaining this age. Besides this, the other people also have been prohibited to enter anybody else's house without permission :

> "O Believers, do not enter houses other than your own, until you have taken permission; and when you enter a house, greet the people therein with salutation. . ." (24 : 27)

The object is to demarcate the house from the outside world, so

that men and women may live in peace inside the house against the gaze of other people. At first the Arabs could not grasp the real significance of these commands; therefore they would often peep into houses from outside. Once the Holy Prophet was present in his room, when a person peeped through the lattice. The Prophet said :

> "If I had known that you were peeping, I would have thrust something into your eye. The command to ask permission has been given to safeguard people against the (evil) look." (*Al-Bukhāri*).

Then the Holy Prophet publicly announced :

> "If a person peeps into somebody else's house without permission, the people of the house will be justified if they injure his eye." (*Muslim*).

Then the people were taught that if they had to ask for something from somebody else's house, they should not straightaway enter the house, but should ask for it from outside from behind a covering.

> " . . . and when you ask women for an article, ask for it from behind a curtain; this is a purer way for your hearts and for theirs . . ." (33 : 53).

Here also the object of imposing the restriction has been stated in these words : " . . . this is a purer way for your hearts and for theirs". The aim is to safeguard the males and the females against sexual inclination and excitement by keeping them at safe distances, so that they do not grow too intimate and free with each other.

These commandments are meant not only for the other people but also for the servants of the house. Once Hazrat Bilāl or Hazrat Anas asked Hazrat Fātimah, daughter of the Holy Prophet, to hand him her child. She handed it by stretching her hand from behind a curtain (*Fath-al-Qadīr*), whereas both these gentlemen were the personal attendants of the Holy Prophet and lived with him like the other people of his house.

Prohibition of Touching or Having Privacy with Women

The third restriction is that a man, other than the husband, is neither allowed to have privacy with a woman, nor is he allowed to touch any part of the body, no matter how closely is he related

to her. According to 'Uqbah bin 'Amir, the Holy Prophet said :

1. "Beware that you do not call on women in privacy". One of the *Ansār* asked, "O Apostle of Allah, what about the younger or the elder brother of the husband?" The Holy Prophet said, "He is death!" (*Al-Tirmizi, Al-Bukhāri and Muslim*).
2. "Do not call on women in the absence of their husbands, because Satan might be circulating in any one of you like blood". (*Al-Tirmizi*).
3. "According to 'Amr bin 'Ās, the Holy Prophet forbade men to call on women without permission of the husbands". (*Al-Tirmizi*).
4. "From this day no man is allowed to call on a woman in the absence of her husband, unless he is accompanied by one or two other men". (*Muslim*).

Likewise is the prohibition of touching the body of a woman :

1. The Holy Prophet said : "The one who touches the hand of a woman without having a lawful relation with her, will have an ember placed on his palm on the Day of Judgement". (*Takmilah, Fath-al-Qadīr*)
2. Hazrat 'Ā'ishah says that the Holy Prophet accepted the oath of allegiance from women only verbally without taking their hand into his own hand. He never touched the hand of a woman who was not married to him. (*Al-Bukhāri*).
3. Omaimah, daughter of Roqaiqah, says that she went to the Holy Prophet in company with some other women to take the oath of allegiance. He made them promise that they would abstain from idolatry, stealing, adultery, slander and disobedience to the Prophet. When they had taken the oath, they requested him to take their hand as a mark of allegiance. The Holy Prophet said : "I do not take the hand of women. Verbal agreement is enough". (*Nasā'i, Ibn Mājah*)

These commandments apply in respect of the young women. It is lawful to sit with the women of advanced age in privacy and touching them is also not prohibited. It has been reported that Hazrat Abū Bakr used to visit the clan where he had been suckled

and shook hands with the old women. It has been reported about Hazrat 'Abdullah bin Zubair that he used to have his feet and head pressed gently for relief by an old woman. This distinction between the old and the young women itself points out that the real object is to prevent such mixing of the sexes together as may lead to evil results.

Distinction Between *Mahram* and Non-*Mahram* Males

These commandments apply to all men, whether *mahram* or non-*mahram*, other than the husband. The woman is not allowed to uncover her *satar* before any of them, just as the man is not allowed to uncover his *satar* before anybody. All males have to enter the house with permission and none of them is allowed to sit with a woman in privacy or touch her body.[1]

Then Islam has made distinction between the *mahram* and the non-*mahram* males. The Qur'an and *Hadith* clearly point out the limits of freedom and intimacy of relationship that can be had with the *mahram* males only, but not with the non-*mahram* males in any case. This is what has commonly been described as Purdah.

1. There is, however, a difference in the matter of touching the body of a woman between the *mahram* and the non-*mahram* males. A brother, for instance, can give his sister a hand in getting on or off a conveyance. Obviously, a non-*mahram* male cannot be allowed to do that. When the Holy Prophet returned from a journey, he would embrace Hazrat Fātimah, his daughter, and kiss her head. Similarly, Hazrat Abu Bakr used to kiss the head of his daughter, Hazrat 'Ā'ishah.

Commandments of Purdah

THE verses of the *Qur'an* that enjoin Purdah are translated as follows :

"(O Prophet), tell the believing men to restrain their eyes (from looking at the other women) and guard their shameful parts; this is a purer way for them; surely, Allah knows full well what they do. And (O Prophet), tell the believing women to restrain their eyes (from looking at the other men) and guard their shameful parts, and not to display their decoration except what is unavoidable. They should draw their over-garments close on to their breasts, and should not display their decoration except before their husbands, fathers, fathers-in-law, sons, step-sons, brothers, nephews (sons of brothers and sisters), their own women, male attendants lacking sexual urges, or boys who are not yet conscious of the feminine secrets. Moreover, (tell them that) they should not stamp the ground in walking so as to reveal their hidden decoration (ornaments, etc., by their jingle) . . . ." (**24** : 30-31).

"O wives of the Prophet, of course you are not like other women; if you are Godfearing, do not talk in a soft voice, lest the man of the unhealthy heart should cherish false hopes from you. If you have to speak (to the other men), speak in an unaffected manner, (as ordinarily people do). And remain in your houses, and do not go about displaying your fineries as women used to do in the days of ignorance . . ." (**33** : 32-33).

"O Prophet, enjoin your wives and daughters and the women of the Muslims to let down over them a part of their outer garments; it is expected that they will be recognized, and thus not molested . . . ." (**33** : 59).

Now let us consider these verses carefully. On the one hand, men have been instructed only to restrain their eyes and guard their morals against indecency. On the other hand, women have not only been enjoined like men to observe these commands but they have been given some additional instructions also for observance in social life. This clearly shows that for the protection of their morals it is not enough for the women to "restrain their eyes" and "guard their shameful parts" only but they have to obey some other laws also. Now we should see how the Holy Prophet and his Companions enforced their brief instructions in the Islamic Social System, and how their sayings and actions explain and illustrate the meaning of these instructions in the actual practical life.

Restraining the Eyes

The first Command that the males and the females have been given is to observe *Ghadd-i-Basar* (غض بصر), which means "restraining the eyes" in the literal sense. But this does not clarify fully the meaning of the original. The Divine Commandment does not mean that the people should always cast down their looks and should never look up, but it aims to warn them to beware of the adultery of the eyes as pointed out in the *Hadith* above. Enjoying the beauty and decoration of the other women by men and making the other men the object of their eyes by women, is liable to lead to evil results. Mischief always starts like this. Therefore, this way has been closed first of all, and this is what is meant by *Ghadd-i-Basr*.

Obviously, a man who lives in this world with his eyes open will see each and every thing. It is not possible that a man will never see a woman or that a woman will never see a man. That is why the Law-giver has absolved from blame the first chance look. But what has been prohibited is that one should cast a second look and stare at the face which one finds attractive at first sight. The instruction in this regard is as follows :

1. Hazrat Jarir says, "I asked the Holy Prophet what I should do if I happen to cast a look by chance". The Holy Prophet replied, "Turn your eyes away". (*Abū Da'ūd*).

2. According to Hazrat Buraidah, the Holy Prophet told Hazrat 'Ali not to cast a second look, for the first look was pardonable but the second was prohibited. (*Abū Da'ūd*).
3. "On the Day of Judgement, molten lead will be poured into the eyes of the man who looks at the charms of a woman lustfully". (*Takmilah, Fath-al-Qadīr*).

But sometimes one has to have a look at the other woman, *e.g.*, a female patient who may be under the treatment of a doctor, or a woman who has to appear before a judge as a witness or as a party. Then one may have to help a woman who is left in a burning place, or a woman who is drowning in water, or a woman whose life or honour is in danger. In such cases, even the shameful parts can be seen if required, and the body can also be touched. So much so that it is not only lawful but obligatory to rescue a drowning or a burning woman even by carrying her in one's lap. The Law-giver commands that as far as possible one should keep one's intention pure at such an occasion. But if in spite of that one's emotions are a little excited naturally, it is not sinful. For one's looking at the other woman and having contact with her body was not intentional, but was necessitated by circumstances, and it is not possible for a man to suppress his natural urges completely.[1]

Likewise, it is not only lawful to have a look at a woman before marriage but this has been enjoined by the *Sharī'ah*. The Holy Prophet himself had a look at a woman for this purpose.

1. Mughīrah bin Sh'abah says, "I sent a message to a woman asking for her hand. The Holy Prophet said to me, 'Have a look at her, for that will enhance love and mutual regard between you'." (*Al-Tirmizī*).
2. According to Sahl bin Sa'd, a woman came to the Holy Prophet and said that she intended to offer herself in marriage to him. Hearing this, the Holy Prophet raised his eyes and looked at her. (*Al-Bukhārī*)
3. Abū Hurairah says that he was sitting with the Holy

1. For further details, please see the explanatory notes on v. 30 of Surah An-Nūr (24) in the Commentary by Imām Rāzi : *Ahkām-al-Qur'an* by al-Jassās and *al-Mabsūt, Kitāb-al-Ihsān*.

Prophet when a man came and said that he intended to marry a woman from among the *Ansār* (Muslims of Madinah). The Holy Prophet asked him if he had seen her. He replied in the negative. The Holy Prophet told him to go and have a look at her, because the *Ansār* had generally some defect in their eyes. (*Muslim*)

4. According to Jābir bin 'Abdullah, the Holy Prophet said that when a man sent a message to a woman asking for her hand, he should have a look at her to see if there was anything in her which made him inclined to marry her. (*Abū-Da'ūd*).

If one considers these exceptions carefully, one will find that the Law-giver does not mean to prohibit at all having a look at the other women, but his real object is to prevent the incidence of evil results. That is why he has prohibited only that casting of the eyes which is not necessary, which does not serve any social purpose, but is charged with sexual motives instead.

This Command applies both to the males and to the females. According to a *Hadīth* related by Hazrat Umm Salmah, one day she was sitting with the Holy Prophet along with Hazrat Maimūnah (Hazrat 'Ā'ishah according to another report) when Hazrat Ibn Umm Maktūm, who was a blind man, called on the Holy Prophet. The Holy Prophet told them to observe Purdah from him. Hazrat Umm Salmah said, "Is he not a blind man? Neither will he see us, nor recognize us". The Holy Prophet said, "Are you also blind? Do you not see him?" (*Al-Tirmizi*).

There is, however, a fine psychological distinction between a woman's looking at men and a man's looking at women. The man is by nature aggressive. If a thing appeals to him, he is urged from within to acquire it. On the contrary, the woman's nature is one of inhibition and escape. Unless her nature is totally corrupted, she can never become so aggressive, bold and fearless as to make the first advances towards the male who has attracted her. In view of this distinction, the Law-giver does not regard the woman's looking at the other men to be as harmful as the man's looking at the other women. In several Traditions it has been reported that the Holy Prophet had himself shown Hazrat 'Ā'ishah the perform-

ance given by the Negroes on the 'Id occasion.[1] This shows that it is not prohibited absolutely for women to have a look at the other men. But what is prohibited is to sit in the same gathering together with men and stare at them, or look at them in a manner as may lead to evil results. The Holy Prophet told Fātimah, daughter of Qais, to pass her waiting term[2] in the house of Ibn Umm Maktūm, the same blind Companion from whom Hazrat Umm Salmah had been instructed to observe Purdah. Qāzi Abū Bakr Ibn 'Arabi has related in his *Ahkām-al-Qur'an* that Fātimah, daughter of Qais, wanted to pass her waiting term in the house of Umm Sharīk. The Holy Prophet did not approve of this for the reason that the house was visited by many people. Therefore, he told her to stay in the house of Ibn Umm Maktūm who was a blind man and she could stay there without observing Purdah. This shows that the real object before the Holy Prophet was to reduce the chances of mischief. That is why the lady was disallowed to stay in a house where the chances of possible mischief were greater but allowed to stay in a house where they were less. And the lady had to stay somewhere. On the contrary, where there was no such need, the ladies were prohibited to sit in the same place face to face with the other man.

All this is based on sound wisdom. The person who is capable of penetrating to the core of the *Shari'ah* can easily understand the wisdom of the Commandment of *Ghadd-i-Basr* and also the reasons for its rigidity and laxity in different circumstances. The only object of the Law-giver is to stop the people from casting the evil looks. Eyes are cast very innocently in the beginning and this is

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1. This Tradition has been related in the Collections by *Bukhāri*, *Muslim*, *Nasā'ī* and *Ahmad* in different ways. Some people have tried to explain the difference by saying that the event took place most, probably during the childhood of Hazrat 'Ā'ishah when the Commandments for Purdah had not yet been sent down. But according to Ibn Hibbān, this event took place in the year 7 A.H., when a deputation from Abyssinia had visited Madīnah. If it is correct, Hazrat 'Ā'ishah was fifteen or sixteen years of age at this time. Moreover, according to a report in *Bukhāri*, the Holy Prophet tried to cover Hazrat 'Ā'ishah time and again with an over-garment. This shows that the injunctions for Purdah had already been ordained.

2. That is, the term during which a widow or a divorced woman is not allowed to remarry.—Tr.

appreciated and supported very cleverly by the devil in man, who says, "This is to satisfy your aesthetic taste which nature has endowed you with. When you are allowed to enjoy other manifestations of the beauty of nature for the sake of pure pleasure, why can't you enjoy the human charms for the sake of spiritual pleasure?" Thus, the devil in man spurs on the desire of seeking pleasure to the limit that the aesthetic taste develops into a craving for physical union. Who can dare deny the fact that all sexual evil that has been committed in the past and is committed today in the world, has been caused primarily by the evil look? Who can claim that his emotional reaction on seeing a charming young member of the opposite sex is the same as that caused by a beautiful flower? If the two kinds of reactions are different, as they surely are, and one of the two is more or less sexual in nature, how can one be justified in demanding the same sort of freedom to gratify one's aesthetic urge in the one case as it exists in the other? The Law-giver does not mean to curb man's aesthetic urge. What he wants is that one should choose one's partner carefully according to one's taste and then make him or her the only object of all one's aesthetic craving. Then one may enjoy him or her as much as one may please, for if one will make others the object of one's attention than that partner, one will involve oneself in indecency and obscenity. Even if one remains immune from sexual promiscuity on account of one's self-control or other barriers, one cannot save oneself from corruption of thought. One will waste most of one's energies through the eyes ; one will pollute one's heart by lamenting the chances one lost in the past to commit sins ; one will get involved time and again in false love and pass sleepless nights, dreaming of love affairs; and most of one's vitality will go waste in the throbbing and excitement of the heart. Is it not a great loss? And is it not the result of casting the evil look? That is why the Law-giver has instructed to restrain the look from wandering. That is why casting of the look at a member of the opposite sex without genuine need has been prohibited as it is likely to lead to evil results. But if there is a genuine need or a social necessity, casting of the look is lawful in spite of the likelihood of mischief. As for the female, however, the law is a bit flexible. She may look at a man

even if there is no genuine need, provided that there is no likelihood of mischief. In contrast to this, a man is not allowed to look at a woman, unless of course, he casts a chance look.

Prohibition of Display of Fineries

The command for restraining the eyes is for both males and females. But there are a few more injunctions for women only. The first injunction is that they should abstain from displaying their "decorations" outside a restricted circle.

Before considering the object and details of this command, let us first refresh our minds about the Divine injunctions with regard to clothing and *satar* as explained above. The whole body of a woman, except the face and the hands, is *satar* which she is not allowed to uncover even before her father, uncle, brother, or son. More than that, it is not approved that a woman should uncover her *satar* even before another woman.[1] Keeping this in view, let us consider the limits set to the display of decorations :

1. The woman has been allowed to display her decoration before her husband, father, father-in-law, son, step-son, brother and nephew (son of sister).

2. She has also been allowed to display her decoration before her slaves (but not before the slaves of others).

3. She may also appear with decoration before such men as are under her control and command and can have no evil inclinations towards her.[2]

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1. Just as it is unlawful for a man to look at any part of a man's body between the navel and the knee, so it is unlawful for a woman to look at the same part of a woman's body. Looking at the other parts is disapproved, though not unlawful.

2. Hāfiz Ibn Kathir explains this Command as follows :

"This means the labourers, servants and other subordinates who are not the equals of the women of a house nor clever and cunning, but simple men who do not cherish sexual desire for the women". (*Tafsir : Ibn Kathir*, Vol. III, p. 285).

There can be two possible ways in which sexual desire may not be cherished. First, one may have no sexual desire at all, as it is in the case of men of advanced age, mentally deranged and feeble-minded men, or eunuchs by birth. Secondly, one may have sexual urge and desire, but one may not be able to cherish it for

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4. She may also display her decoration before such children as may not yet have developed sexual feelings, or, according to the Qur'an, "such boys as may not yet be aware of the feminine secrets".

5. She is also permitted to appear with decoration before the women with whom she has every day social relations. The words used in the Qur'an imply such women as are noble of character, or have family or blood relations, or are of equal rank. All other women besides these who may not be well-known, or may be of doubtful character, or notorious on account of their evil ways, are excluded from the permission, for contact with them can easily lead to evil results. That is why Hazrat 'Umar wrote to Hazrat Abū 'Obaidah bin al-Jarrāh, Governor of Syria, to prohibit the Muslim

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the women of the house where one is employed as a labourer or servant, or which one visits for alms, due to one's inferior status.

Thus, the command will apply to both categories of men. But it should be borne in mind that the men before whom the women of a house are allowed to appear with decoration must necessarily be under the command and control of that house, and they should not even think of cherishing sexual desire for the women of the house. This is, however, the responsibility of the governor of the house to see that the men who were confided in and allowed to enter the house prove to be reliable. If later on their conduct becomes questionable, permission for them should be cancelled. In this connection, the most relevant is of that eunuch whom the Holy Prophet had permitted to enter the houses, but then, he not only cancelled his permission but also ordered him to leave Madīnah. This eunuch lived in Madīnah and used to call on the wives of the Holy Prophet. One day he was sitting in the house of Hazrat Umm Salmah and talking to her brother, Hazrat 'Abdullah. In the meantime the Holy Prophet came and as he entered the house, he heard him say to 'Abdullah, "If Tāif is taken tomorrow, I will show you Bādiah, daughter of Ghailān Thaqfi...." and then he gave minute details of her body so as to allure the hearer. Hearing this, the Holy Prophet remarked, "O enemy of God, it seems you have examined her too closely!" Then he said to his wives, "I find that he is aware of the feminine secrets; he should not, therefore, visit you any more". The Holy Prophet did not rest content with this, but turned him out of Madīnah and ordered him to stay at Baidā'. For he found from the description he gave of the *satar* of the daughter of Ghailān that because of his effeminate nature women became as free with him as they would with any of their own women. And this furnished him with the opportunity of becoming aware of the ferminine secrets which he would describe before men in a manner as could lead to evil consequences. (*Bazl-al-Majhūd : Kitāb-al-Libās*).

women from going to baths with the women of the people of the Book. [*Ibn Jarīr* : Commentary on v. 31 of *Sūrah An-Nūr* (24)]. Hazrat Ibn 'Abbās says, "A Muslim woman is not allowed to display herself before the women of the unbelievers and non-Muslim tax-payers, any more than she can display herself before the other men". (*Tafsīr-i-Kabīr* : Commentary on v. 31 of *Sūrah An-Nūr*).

This did not mean to create any religious distinction. It only aimed at safeguarding the Muslim women against the influence of the women whose moral and cultural background was not fully known, or if known to some extent, it was objectionable from the Islamic point of view. However, the Muslim women have been allowed to mix freely with those non-Muslim women who are noble of character, chaste and well mannered.

If we consider these limits carefully, we can draw two conclusions : First, the decoration that can be displayed in this restricted circle does not include the female *satar*. It means the ornaments, decent clothing, use of collyrium and henna, hairdos and all other decorations that women are by nature fond of showing in their houses.

Second, this kind of decoration can either be diplayed by a woman before the males for whom she is permanently unlawful, or before those who lack sexual desire, or those who are incapable of becoming a source of evil. That is why permission has been restricted in the case of women to "their own women", in the case of men to those "lacking sexual urges", and in the case of children to those "who are not yet aware of the feminine secrets". This shows that the Law-giver means to restrict the display of decoration by women to a limited circle, so as to reduce to minimum the chances of emotional excitement or sexual anarchy on account of the female charms and decorations.

Woman has been prohibited to display her fineries before all other men, outside this circle. So much so that she is not allowed even to stamp the ground in walking, lest her hidden decoration should be revealed by its jingle, and thus attract attention. The decoration which she has been commanded to conceal from the other men is the same which she has been allowed to display in the above-mentioned circle. The object is clear. That is, if women are

allowed to appear in full make-up freely before men who neither lack sexual desires, nor are immune from sexual urges because of permanent unlawfulness, the consequences warranted by human nature will inevitably follow. It cannot, however, be claimed that such a display of fineries shall turn every woman into a prostitute, nor that every man shall become an adulterer. But, at the same time nobody can deny that if women go about in full make-up and mix freely with men, it is likely to result in countless open and secret moral and material disadvantages for the society.

Today women in Europe and America are spending the major portion of their own and their husbands' incomes on make up and decoration, and the rising expenditure on this account is becoming more and more unbearable.[1] Is not this craze the gift of the lustful eyes that eagerly wait to greet decorated ladies in the bazars and streets, offices and social gatherings ? The question is : Why is this craze for beautification among women becoming more and more catching every day ?—Most surely, it is due to the feminine urge to win the approbation of men and to fascinate them.[2] But

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1. In connection with a recent exhibition of cosmetics, the experts stated that the English women were spending about £20,000,000 and the American women about £125,000,000 annually on decoration, and that 90 per cent of women were fond of some sort of make-up.

2. The craze for beautification among women is now costing them even their lives. Their ideal is to become as light and slim as possible by avoiding to put on even an ounce of extra flesh. Every girl endeavours to keep herself within the beauty measurements set by experts for the shin, the thigh, the breast, etc., as if the sole object of her life was to appear more and more attractive and appealing to others. To achieve this object she goes on a restricted diet and deprives herself of the nourshing food. She lives only on lemon juice, bitter coffee and other light refreshments, and uses such drugs without medical advice, mostly against medical advice, as may render her slim. Many women have lost their lives in the craze. In 1937, a famous actress of Budapest died suddenly of heart failure, and soon after her tragic end three women met a similar fate. It was reported that these women were used to taking patent drugs for reducing weight and lost their lives in the craze for "slimness". Zabo, the famous Hungarian singer, collapsed on the stage while performing before thousands of audience. She was in fact worried about her figure and had succeeded in reducing herself by [illegible] lbs in two months' time by artificial devices. This had rendered her abnormally

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what for ? Is it an innocent urge ? Does it not spring from the hidden sexual desires which crave for their fulfilment outside their lawful, natural sphere by similar desires on the other side ? If one denies this, then one may perhaps have no hesitation to deny that underneath a volcano over-shadowed by smoke there is always something called lava forcing for an outlet. One may act and behave as one may please, but one should not close one's eyes to facts. These facts are no longer hidden ; they have become manifest and their results are as clear as the sun. Even so they are acknowledged consciously or unconsciously by everybody in daily life. Islam, however, checks such trends and means to nip the mischief in the bud. That is why it looks with concern upon the seemingly "innocent" display of decoration, which eventually sends the whole society to its doom. According to a *Hadith*, "A woman who freely mixes with the other people and shows off her decoration is without light and virtue". (*Al-Tirmizi*).

The Holy *Qur'an* prohibits the display of decoration by women before the other people except what is unavoidable. People have tried to exploit this exception to serve their own "theories". But the difficulty is that these words do not allow much scope for misinterpretation. What the Law-giver means to say is that a woman should not display her decoration before others on purpose, but she is not responsible for that which cannot be helped. That is, one should not show off nor display one's fineries before others, not even by causing it to jingle in order to attract attention. On the contrary, one should try one's utmost to hide one's fineries, but

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Cont. from p. 188]

weak and she could not survive for long. Then came the turn of actress Emola who reduced herself to an extent that she became a mental case and had to be lodged in the asylum. Reports about well-known ladies are published in the newspapers, but who can calculate the extent of damage being done to health and life in every country every day in the craze for beautification ? Is it women's emancipation or their servility ? It is indeed on account of this so-called emancipation that the female has become increasingly servile to the monster of the male's passion. It has rendered her so slavish as to deprive her of freedom to eat, freedom to drink and freedom to care for health. So much so that her sole object of life seems to be living or dying for the sake of the man's pleasure and enjoyment.

if in spite of that some part of it remains uncovered, God will not take one to task for it. Obviously, the outer garments with which one hides one's decoration will remain uncovered. Similarly, one's stature, physical build and figure cannot be hidden. Then one may have sometimes to uncover one's hand or a part of one's face for a genuine need. This is not prohibited, for it is not done with a desire to show off. One cannot possibly avoid it. If a mean person draws pleasure from it, he will suffer for his own evil intention. The woman who performed her moral and social duty as well as she could is absolved from all blame.

This is the correct meaning of the verse in question. Though the commentators hold different views about its interpretation, yet all their differences boil down to the meaning as explained above.

According to Ibn Mas'ūd, Ibrāhīm Nakh'ī and Hasan Basrī, the external decoration implies those garments which the woman puts on to cover the internal decoration, for instance, the over-garment or the veil.

According to Ibn 'Abbās, Mujāhid, 'Atā', Ibn 'Umar, Anas, Zahhāk, Sa'īd bin Jubair, Auzā'ī and the Hanafite *Imāms*, it means the face and the hand including the articles meant for their decoration, for instance, henna, rings, collyrium, etc.

Sa'īd bin al-Musayyab holds that the face only is excepted and he is supported in this view by Hasan Basrī also in one of his sayings.

Hazrat 'Ā'ishah opines that the face should be covered and holds that the external decoration implies the hand, bangles, rings, etc.

Miswar bin Makhramah and Qatādah allow the uncovering of the hands along with their decoration, but it appears that they only favour the uncovering of the eyes and not the whole face.[1]

If we consider these differences carefully, we shall find that according to all these commentators, Allah has allowed the exposure of that decoration which is unavoidable, or which one has to reveal for a genuine need. On the contrary, no one has supported the view that the face and the hands should be displayed on purpose. What

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1. All these sayings have been taken from the Commentary by Ibn Jarir and *Ahkām-al-Qur'an* by al-Jassās.

they have tried to interpret according to their lights and in view of the genuine needs of women is how far the face and the hand may be displayed if so required, or what cannot be helped. Let us not restrict "except what is unavoidable" to any of these conditions. A Muslim woman who means to follow the Commands of Allah and His Prophet faithfully, and who is also not prepared to get involved in a scandal, can herself decide according to her own conditions and requirements whether she should cover or uncover her face and hand, when and to what extent. In this regard, the Law-giver has neither specified any laws nor is it wise and proper to devise such laws in view of the different circumstances and conditions of the people.

A woman who is required by circumstances to go out and work will have to uncover both her face and her hands at times. Such a woman is allowed to do so as and when required by the occasion. On the contrary, the woman whose circumstances are different is not allowed to do so intentionally, without a genuine need.

Thus, according to the Law-giver, it is sinful to display anything with a view to showing off one's charms. But if something is displayed which is unavoidable, it is not sinful. Moreover, if one is required to uncover any part of one's body under a genuine need, one is allowed to do so. Now the question arises : What is the Command about the face itself, irrespective of the difference of circumstances? Does the Law-giver approve its uncovering or disapprove it? May one uncover it only if required under inevitable circumstances, or is it something which may not at all be hidden from anybody? Answers to these questions have been given in v. 59 of *Sūrah Al-Ahzāb* (33).

Covering the Face

The above-mentioned verse says :

> "O Prophet, enjoin your wives and daughters and the women of the Muslims to let down over them a part of their outer garments; it is expected that they will thus be recognized and not molested . . . ." (33 : 59).

This verse especially enjoins the covering of the face. This may be done either by drawing a part of the outer-garment in front of the face, or by a veil, or in some other way. The *Qur'an* says that when

the Muslim women go out thus covered, they will be considered as respectable women, and not as lewd ones, and therefore nobody will think of molesting them.

All the commentators of the *Qur'an* have given this same meaning to this verse. Hazrat Ibn 'Abbās, commenting on this verse, says :

> "Allah has enjoined on the Muslim women that when they go out of their houses under some necessity, they should cover their faces by drawing a part of their outer-garments over their heads". (*Commentary* by Ibn Jarir, Vol. XXII, p. 29).

Imām Muhammad bin Sīrīn asked Hazrat 'Ubaidah bin Sufyān bin al-Hārith how one should follow and practise the Command of covering the face. Hazrat 'Ubaidah put on an outer-garment himself and gave a demonstration by covering his forehead and nose and an eye, leaving only the other eye uncovered. (*Commentary* by Ibn Jarīr and *Ahkām-al-Qur'an,* Vol. III, p. 457)

'Allāmah Ibn Jarīr Tabari, commenting on this, expands it like this :

> "O Prophet, enjoin your wives and daughters and the women of the Muslims that when they go out of their houses under some necessity, they should refrain from wearing clothes like the slave-girls, leaving the head and the face uncovered, but they should draw a part of their outer-garments in front of their faces, so that no evil person may molest them, and all may know that they are respectable women". (Reference as quoted above). 'Allāmah Abū Bakr al-Jassās says :
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> "This verse shows that the young woman while going out of the house should hide her face from the other people, and cover herself up in such a manner as may express modesty and chastity, so that the people with evil intentions might not cherish false hopes from her". (*Ahkām-al-Qur'an,* Vol. III, p. 458).
>
> 'Allāmah Neishāpūrī says in his *Gharāib-al-Qur'an* :
>
> "In the beginning of the Islamic era, women used to come out in the shirt and the wrapper only as the women of the days of ignorance did, and the dress of the respectable women was not any different from that of the women of inferior status. Then they were enjoined to put on the outer-garments and cover the

head and the face so that people might know that they were respectable women, and not immodest ones". (*Ibn Jarīr*, Vol. XII, p. 32).

Imām Rāzi says :

"In the days of ignorance, women of the Arab nobility and the slave-girls moved about freely and they were teased by the evil-doers. Allah enjoined on the respectable women to cover themselves up with the outer-garment, and said, "....it is expected that they will thus be recognized and not molested". This may have two meanings : first, they will be recognized as respectable women from their dress, and will not be teased ; second, it will be known that they are not promiscuous. For the woman who covers the face, though it is not obligatory to cover it, cannot be expected to uncover her *satar* which is obligatory to cover before the other person. Thus, she will be regarded as a modest and virtuous woman who cannot be expected to do anything indecent". (*Tafsīr-i-Kabīr*, Vol. VI, p. 591).

Qazi Baidāvi says :

".....to let down over them a part of their outer garments" means that they should draw a part of their outer-garment in front of their face and cover themselves up with the rest of it. ".....it is expected that they will be recognized...." means that they will be distinguished from the slave-girls and the singers. ".....and thus not molested" means that the people of doubtful character will not dare molest them". (*Tafsīr-i-Baidāvi*, Vol, IV, p. 168).

These quotations clearly show that right from the time of the Companions of the Holy Prophet down to the eighth century (A.H.) the one and the same meaning has been attached to this verse, that we have given above. Then from the Traditions also we come to know that after the revelation of this verse, Muslim women of that period had started wearing the veil, and the practice of moving about with the uncovered face had been discarded. In *Mu'atta* and the other Collections of *Hadīth* by *Abu Dā'ūd* , *Tirmizi*, etc., it has been related that the Holy Prophet had forbidden the women to wear the veil over the face and the gloves on the hands while in

Ihrām.[1] This clearly shows that during the blessed period of the Holy Prophet, the veil and the gloves were in common use for covering the face and the hands. Their use was forbidden only when a woman was dressed for pilgrimage. But this did not mean that women should make an open show of their faces during the course of *Hajj*. In fact, it aimed to prohibit them from making the veil a part of the humble pilgrim's dress as they usually made it. And we learn from other Traditions that while in *Ihrām*, the wives of the Holy Prophet and the common Muslim women concealed their faces from the other people even without the veil. According to *Abū Da'ūd*, Hazrat 'Ā'ishah says :

> "We, the women, were with the Holy Prophet, in *Ihrām*, and the riders passed by us. So, when they appeared before us, we drew our outer-garments from the head in front of the face, and when they rode past us, we uncovered our faces".

According to *Mu'attā* of Imām Mālik, Fātimah, daughter of Munzir, says :

> "We used to cover our faces with the outer-garment while in *Ihrām*. Once Hazrat Asmā', a daughter of Hazrat Abū Bakr, was with us, but she did not prohibit us from this, (that is, she did not say that the prohibition of wearing the veil while in *Ihrām* also applied to the covering of our faces during *Hajj* days)".

According to a tradition related by Hazrat 'Ā'ishah in *Fath-al-Bāri*, Kitab-al-Hajj.

> "A woman dressed in *Ihrām* should draw her outer-garment over her head in front of her face".

The Veil

A person who considers carefully the words of the Quranic verse, their well-known and generally accepted meaning and the practice during the time of the Holy Prophet, cannot dare deny the fact that the Islamic *Shari'ah* enjoins on the woman to hide her face from the other people, and this has been the practice of the Muslim women ever since the time of the Holy Prophet himself. Though the veil has not been specified in the *Qur'an*, it is Quranic in spirit. The Muslim women living at the time of the Holy Prophet

1 Seamless garment that is put on during the *Hajj* days.

to whom the *Qur'an* was revealed had made it a regular part of their dress outside the house, and even at that time it was called *Niqāb* (نقاب), the veil.

Yes ! This is the same "veil" which Europe loathes and detests, and the very vision of which weighs heavily on the Western conscience, and which is regarded as a mark of oppression, narrow-mindedness and barbarism. Yes, this is the same thing that is mentioned first of all in pointing out the ignorance and backwardness of an Eastern nation. So much so that when a person has to describe the cultural and social advancement of an Eastern nation, the first thing that he mentions with great satisfaction is that it has discarded the "veil". Now if the Muslim so feels, let him hang his head with shame. For it is not something that was devised and adopted later; it was indeed devised by the *Qur'an* itself and established by the Holy Prophet himself as a social custom. But the mere hanging of the head will be of no avail. If the ostrich buries its head in the sand, it cannot do away with the hunter. Likewise, even if the Muslim hanged his head, he cannot cancel the Quranic verse, nor blot out the established facts of history. If he tries to cover it up with misinterpretation, this "shameful blot" will become all the more glaring. When under the influence of "Westernism", he has begun to look upon it as something shameful, the only honourable course for him will be to discard Islam itself which enjoins the covering of the face with such "loathsome" a thing as the veil. People enamoured of "progress" and "civilization" cannot sincerely follow a religion that prohibits the respectable women from becoming society women, which inculcates *Hayā*, modesty and chastity, and which forbids the queen of the house to become the "object of beauty" for others outside the house. How can such a religion as Islam allow such "progress" and "civilization"? For the object of "progress" and "civilization" cannot be achieved unless the woman can spare a couple of hours every time she wants to move out of the house and applies herself exclusively to self-decoration and make-up by perfuming her body, putting on highly attractive matching clothes, enhancing the glamour of the face and arms, using lip-stick and other beauty aids, and setting her eye-brows and blackening her eye-lids, so that when she goes out thus equipped she may bewitch

all and sundry.

As we have repeatedly pointed out above, the objectives of Islam and Western civilization are poles apart. Therefore, the person who interprets the Islamic injunctions from the Western point of view commits a blunder, for the Western criterion of judging the value of things is radically opposed to that adopted by Islam. The things which are held as highly important and valuable in the West are indeed of little or no value in the eyes of Islam, and *vice versa*. Thus the person who believes in the Western criterion will feel that every Islamic thing needs to be altered and modernised. That is why, when he begins to interpret the injunctions of Islam, he distorts them. And even after their distortion he is not able to apply them properly to life as he is obstructed time and again by the clear injuctions of the *Qur'an* and *Sunnah*. Therefore, the proper thing for such a person to do would be that before he considers the practical measures, he should examine how far the objectives themselves for the realization of which these measures have been devised are acceptable. For if he does not agree with the objectives, why should he take the trouble of discussing, and then distorting, the means of realizing them? Why should not one discard the religion itself whose objectives one does not believe in? If, however, one believes in the objectives, the only thing that remains to be decided is whether the practical measures devised to realize them are suitable or not, and this is by no means a difficult thing to decide. But such an approach can be adopted only by the honest, sincere people. As for the hypocrites, they are the meanest and most wretched of all God's creation. It suits them to declare that they believe in one thing, whereas they actually believe in something quite different.

Indeed, all the disputes about the veil spring from this hypocrisy. People have tried their very best to prove that the present form of Purdah was a custom of the pre-Islamic communities, and that the Muslims adopted this custom of ignorance long after the time of the Holy Prophet. The question is : Where was the necessity of carrying out this historical research in the presence of a clear verse of the *Qur'an*, the established practice of the time of the Holy Prophet, and

the explanations given by the Companions and their pupils? Obviously this trouble was taken in order to justify the objectives of life prevalent in the West. For without this, it was not possible to advocate the Western concepts of "progress" and "civilization" that have got deeply fixed in the minds. Since wearing of the veil runs counter to these objectives and does not in any way fit in with the Western concepts, efforts were made by means of historical research to blot out the tradition that is based on the clear laws of Islam. This open hypocrisy that had already been shown in the case of many other problems has again been shown in the matter of the veil as well. It is again due to the same unprincipled behaviour, bankruptcy of reason and the lack of moral courage that these people have dared to refute the *Qur'an* by their so-called historical research, despite their profession of Islam. Had they been honest and sincere, they would either have discarded their concepts in favour of Islam (provided that they wanted to remain Muslims), or they would have openly discarded Islam which prevents them from making "progress".

The person who understands the aims of the Islamic law and also has some common sense cannot fail to see that allowing women the freedom to move about with uncovered faces runs counter to the objectives held so dear by Islam. The face is the most impressive thing in the human body. It is the index of the natural human charms, the most attractive part and the one possessing great sex appeal for others. To understand this one does not require any extensive knowledge of psychology. If one searches one's own heart, asks for the verdict of one's own eyes, and analyses one's own psychic experiences, one will have to admit (provided that one is not hypocritical) that of all decorations of the body, the natural charm placed by the Creator in the structure of the face has the greatest sex appeal. That is why if one has to marry a girl, one desires to see her face, if nothing else. If one is shown the whole figure of a girl but not her face, one is not satisfied. This shows that the beauty of the face is by far the most important thing in the human body.

Now that this fact has been established, let us proceed further. If it is not intended to prevent sexual anarchy and emotional dis-

persion in the society, then the female should have the freedom to expose the breasts, the arms, the shins and the thighs, besides the face, as in the modern Western civilization. In this case, all those restrictions and limits which have been imposed by the Islamic Law of Purdah will be out of the question. But if, on the other hand, the object is to curb indecency and obscenity, then nothing can be more unreasonable than to close all the minor ways to indecency but to fling the main gate wide open.

One may ask : Why has then Islam allowed uncovering of the face under genuine need? The reply is that the law of Islam is not a one-sided, irrational law. On the one hand, it safeguards the morals of man; on the other, it takes into account his genuine needs also, and thus strikes a balance between the two sides of life. It intends to eradicate immorality, but at the same time it does not restrain a person from satisfying his genuine needs. That is why it has not given the women an absolute command in respect of covering the face as in respect of covering the *satar* and hiding the decoration, because this does not restrain her from attending to the needs of life. But, on the other hand, if the hand and the face are kept permanently covered, she may find it extremely difficult to attend to her daily needs. Therefore, it was enjoined on the woman to cover the face with the veil, and this command has been relaxed by the exception "except what is unavoidable", so that she may uncover the face if required under necessity, provided that she does not mean to display her charms. Then, on the other side, men were enjoined to "restrain their eyes", so that if a modest woman uncovered her face under necessity, they would cast their looks down and refrain from staring at her in an indecent way.

If one carefully considers these injunctions for Purdah, one will find that the Islamic Purdah is not a custom of ignorance, but it is a rational law. A custom of ignorance is something rigid : it does not permit of modification or change under any circumstances. If it covers a thing, it covers it for ever, and it cannot be uncovered whatever may happen. In contrast to this, a rational law is flexible. It permits of strictness and laxity according to the circumstances ; it permits of exceptions in its rules according to the time and occa-

sion. Such a law cannot be followed blindly: it demands discrimination. A sensible follower can decide for himself where he should obey the general rule and where under the law he is allowed to avail himself of the exceptions in view of "genuine needs". Then he himself can settle the question : How far in a particular situation can he make use of the exception and how can he keep in view the object of the law? In all such matters, the conscience of an honest, sincere Believer alone can be the true judge, as has been said by the Holy Prophet :

> "Ask for the verdict of your conscience and discard what pricks it".

That is why Islam cannot be properly followed without knowledge. It is a rational law, and to follow it rightly one needs to exercise reason and understanding at every step.

CHAPTER 14

Divine Laws for the Movements of Women

AFTER fixing the bounds for *satar* and clothing, the final Commandment given to women is :

1. " . . and remain in your houses, and do not go about displaying your fineries as women used to do in the days of ignorance . . ." (33 : 33).
2. " . . . they should not stamp the ground in walking so as to reveal their hidden decoration (ornaments, etc., by their jingle) . . ." (24 : 31).
3. ". . . do not talk in a soft voice, lest the man of the unhealthy heart should cherish false hopes from you . . ." (33 : 32).

Due to the variant readings of the word قَرْنَ (*qarna*) in the first-quoted verse, the two different renderings will be as follows :

"Stay in or stick to your houses".

"Remain in your houses with dignity and peace"

Tabarruj (تبرج) has two meanings :

(*a*) to display decoration and charms, and

(*b*) to walk in a coquettish manner displaying the charms of gait.

The verse implies both these meanings. In the pre-Islamic days of ignorance, women used to come out fully decorated as they are coming out now in the modern age of ignorance. Then the gait adopted by them was such as allured the hearts of onlookers. Qatādah, who was a follower of the Companions, and a famous commentator of the *Qur'an* says :

"Their gait was coquettish ; therefore Allah forbade them to walk in that manner".

And one need not go back to history in search of this picture. One has only to visit a place frequented by women clad in the Western style, and one will witness the "coquettish gait" of the pre-Islamic days of ignorance. Islam forbids this. It says that the real place for the woman is the house and she has been exempted from the outdoor duties so that she may lead a dignified and peaceful life at home and carry out her domestic responsibilities efficiently. She has, however, been allowed to go out of the house to fulfil her genuine needs, but while going out she must observe complete modesty. Neither should she wear glamorous clothes that attract attention, nor should she cherish the desire to display the charms of the face and the hand, nor should she walk in a manner as may invite the attention of others. Moreover, she should not go out wearing such ornaments as jingle and please the other people. She should not speak to them without necessity, and if she has to speak, she should not speak in a sweet and soft voice. If the woman observes these laws and limits she may go out of the house as and when required.

This is in brief the teaching of the *Qur'an*. Now let us refer to *Hadith* and see how the Holy Prophet enforced this Divine teaching in the society, and how the Companions and their women practised these laws.

Permission to Leave the House

It has been related in the Traditions that even before the Commandments of Purdah came down, Hazrat 'Umar had requested the Holy Prophet to enjoin his wives to observe Purdah. Therefore, when once Hazrat Saudah, a wife of the Holy Prophet, came out of the house Hazrat 'Umar saw her and said aloud, "Saudah, I have recognized you". By this he meant that somehow the women should be prohibited from coming out of the house. After this, when the Commandments of Purdah were sent down, Hazrat 'Umar felt relieved and started more often checking the women for coming out of the houses. Thus, he again encountered Hazrat Saudah outside the house and remonstrated with her. She complained to the Holy Prophet, who said :

"Allah has permitted you to go out of the house for genuine

needs".[1]

This shows that the Divine injunction, "Remain in your houses", does not mean that women should not at all step out of the four walls of the house. They are allowed to go out under necessity. But this permission is neither unconditional, nor unlimited. Women are not allowed to move about freely and mix with men in social gatherings. From the viewpoint of *Shari'ah*, genuine needs are those needs which require women to come out and work outside the house. Obviously, it is not possible to determine every aspect of the permission to come out of the houses for all women for all times and occasions. The Law-giver, however, has made rules to regulate the movements of women in the normal circumstances of life and enjoined the observance of Purdah and allowed relaxation therein according to those circumstances. One should study these rules and form an idea about the spirit and trend of the law of Islam, and then should determine for one's personal guidance the limits of Purdah, and the grounds of relaxation therein, according to one's special circumstances. To explain this, we shall present a few illustrations in the following pages.

Permission to Visit the Mosque

It is well known that the foremost obligatory duty in Islam is to offer the prescribed prayers, as far as possible, in the mosque in congregation. But in this regard, the Commands for the males are different from those meant for the females. For the males the best prayer is that which is offered in the mosque in congregation, whereas for the females the best prayer is that which is offered inside the house in seclusion. *Imām Ahmad* and *Tabarāni* have reported the following *Hadith* from Umm Humaid Sā'idiyyah :

> She said, "O Prophet of Allah, I desire to offer prayers under your leadership". The Holy Prophet said, "I know that ; but your offering the prayer in a corner is better than your offering it in your closet ; and your offering the prayer in your closet is better than your offering it in the courtyard of your house; and your offering the prayer in the courtyard is better than your

1. This is the gist of many Traditions on the subject contained in the Collections of *Hadith* by *Muslim* and *Al-Bukhāri*.

offering it in the neighbouring mosque ; and your offering it in the neighbouring mosque is better than your offering it in the biggest mosque of the town".[1]

Another *Hadith* on this subject has been related from Ibn Mas'ūd in the Collection by *Abū Da'ūd*. The Holy Prophet said :

"It is better for a woman to offer her prayers in her closet than in the main room of the house, and it is better for her to offer her prayers in her hiding-place than in her closet".

Obviously, the order here has been reversed. For the males, the prayer of the least value is that which is offered in seclusion, and of the greatest worth that which is offered in the biggest congregation. But for the females, on the other hand, the prayer offered in seclusion is of greater worth than the prayer in congregation ; so much so that a prayer offered in seclusion by them has been regarded as of greater value and worth than even the greatest blessing for a Muslim, that is, a prayer offered in congregation in the Mosque of the Prophet under the leadership of Muhammad himself (may Allah's peace be upon him), the greatest of the Prophets of Allah. The question is : What is the reason for this discrimination ? Obviously, nothing than this that the Law-giver has disapproved women's coming out of the houses frequently and mixing with the males in congregations.

The Islamic Prayer, of course, is a holy worship and the mosque

1. Women can better understand the wisdom as to why they have been instructed to offer the prayers in seclusion. Women have to discontinue offering prayers for some days during every month on account of the menses. Thus, the reason for discontinuance which no modest woman would like even her brothers and sisters to know becomes known. Many women stop offering prayers permanently for this reason. The Law-giver, therefore, has instructed them to offer prayers in privacy, so that nobody could observe when they offered the prayer and when they discontinued offering it. But this is only an instruction, not a command. Women may arrange their congregational prayers separately under the leadership of a woman. Umm Waraqah, daughter of Naufal, had been authorised by the Holy Prophet to lead women in prayers (*Abu Da'ud*). According to *Darqutni* and *Baihaqi*, Hazrat 'A'ishah led women in prayers while standing in the same line with them in the middle. This shows that when a woman has to lead the prayer, she should not take her position in the front but should stand inside the line along with other women.

a sacred place. The Law-giver has expressed his real intention by pointing out the worth and value of the prayers offered at different places, so that the mixing of the sexes may be prevented, but he has not prohibited women at all from coming to such a sacred place as the mosque for such a pious purpose as of offering the prayers. The words of the *Hadith* in which women have been permitted to come to the mosques point to the great wisdom of the Law-giver. He said :

1. "Do not prohibit the slave-girls of Allah from coming to the mosques of Allah. When a wife of one of you asks for permission to go to the mosque, she should not be refused the permission". (*Al-Bukhāri* and *Muslim*).
2. "Do not prevent your women from coming to the mosques, though their houses are better for them". (*Abū Da'ūd*).

These words clearly show that the Law-giver does not prohibit women from going to the mosques, because it is not a sin to go to the mosques for offering prayer, but at the same time they cannot be allowed to mix with the males for moral reasons. Therefore, women have been allowed to visit the mosques but the males have not been instructed to send their women to the mosque or bring them along with them. What has been enjoined is that if they at all ask for permission to go to the mosque for offering a prayer of less spiritual merit than the one of greater merit in the house, they should not be refused the permission. Hazrat 'Umar who was fully conscious of the spirit of Islam understood well the wisdom of this instruction of the Law-giver. It has been reported in *Mu'attā* that he always had a conflict in this regard with his wife 'Ātikah, daughter of Zaid. He did not want her to go to the mosque, but she always insisted on going. Whenever she asked for permission, Hazrat 'Umar would keep quiet, strictly in accordance with the command of the Holy Prophet. Thus he would neither stop her nor permit her in clear words. But she was also a lady of her will. She would say, "By God, I will go to the mosque till I am forbidden in clear words".[1]

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1. Besides the wife of Hazrat 'Umar, many other women also visited the mosque to join in congregational prayers in the time of the Holy Prophet. According to *Abū Da'ūd*, the number of such women generally rose so high that they had to stand in two rows.

Conditions of Visting the Mosque

The permission to visit the mosque has been made conditional. The first condition is that women should not go to the mosque in the day-time, but they may join in those prayers which are offered in the dark, that is, the Night Prayer and the Dawn Prayer. According to Ibn 'Umar, the Holy Prophet said :

"Let the women come to the mosque at night". (*Al-Tirmizi, Al-Bukhāri*).

According to Nāf'i, the famous pupil of Hazrat Ibn 'Umar, night-time has been specified because women can easily observe Purdah in the dark. Hazrat 'Ā'ishah says that the Holy Prophet used to offer the Dawn Prayer so early that the women could not be recognized in the dark, when, wrapped in their outer-garments, they returned home after the prayer.[1] (*Al-Tirmizi*).

Secondly, women should not come to the mosque with decoration and perfume. Hazrat 'Ā'ishah says that once the Holy Prophet was in the mosque when a woman from the clan of Muzainah came, walking in a coquettish manner, with full decoration. The Holy Prophet said :

> "O People, prohibit your women from coming to the mosque with decoration and coquetry". (*Ibn Mājah*).

About the use of perfume by women, he said :

> "Do not use any perfume or scent in the night when you want to join the prayers in the mosque. Come in a simple dress. The women who uses perfume will not have her prayer rewarded by Allah". (*Mu'attā, Muslim* and *Ibn Mājah*).

Thirdly, women should not mix with the males in the congregation, nor should they stand in the front rows. They should stand separately behind the rows of men. The Holy Prophet said :

> "The best place for men is in the front rows, and the worst at the rear, whereas the best place for women is at the rear, and the worst in the front rows".

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1. Other Traditions on this subject have also been reported in the Collections of *Hadith* by Al-Bukhari, Muslim, Abū Da'ūd and others. It has also been related that after the prayers were over, the Holy Prophet and all the males remained sitting till the women had left the mosque. Then they would rise and disperse.

That is why he enjoined that in congregational prayers man and woman should not stand side by side even if they were the husband and the wife, or the mother and the son. Hazrat Anas says, "Mulaikah, my maternal grandmother, invited the Holy Prophet to a meal. After it was over, the Holy Prophet rose for prayers. Yatīm and I stood behind him and Mulaikah stood behind us". (*Al-Tirmizi*). According to another Tradition from Hazrat Anas, the Holy Prophet offered prayers in his house, when he and Yatīm stood behind him and Umm Sulaim, his mother, stood behind them. (*Al-Bukhāri*). Hazrat Ibn 'Abbas says, "Once the Holy Prophet stood up for prayers. I stood beside him and Hazrat 'Ā'ishah stood behind us". (*Nasā'ī*).

Fourthly, women are not allowed to raise their voice during the prayer. Therefore, if the Imām has to be warned of an error men should say *Subhan-Allah* (Allah be glorified), but women should only tap their hands. (*Al-Bukhāri* and *Abū* Da'ūd).

Despite these conditions, when Hazrat 'Umar felt that there was a danger in the mixing of the sexes in congregations, he fixed a separate door of the mosque for use by women, and forbade men to use that door for entrance and exit. (*Abū* Da'ūd).

Rules for Women during Hajj

The second congregational duty in Islam is the performance of *Hajj* which is obligatory both for men and for women. But women have been prohibited from mixing with men as far as possible while moving round the Ka'abah. According to a tradition related by 'Atā' in the Collection by *Al-Bukhāri*, women used to move round the Ka'abah along with men during the time of the Holy Prophet, but they did not mix with them. According to a tradition related by Ibrahīm Nakh'ī in *Fath-al-Bārī*, Hazrat 'Umar had forbidden the males and the females to mix during the ceremonial rounds of the Ka'abah. Once when he saw a man in the midst of women, he caught hold of him and whipped him. (Vol. III, p. 312). According to *Mu'attā*, Hazrat 'Abdullah bin 'Umar used to send the members of his family in advance from Muzdalifah to Minā, so that the women could offer the Dawn Prayer and perform the stone-throwing ceremony before the people arrived. Similarly, Asmā, a

daughter of Abū Bakr, used to leave for Minā early in the morning when it was still dark, as that was the common practice among women during the time of the Holy Prophet.

Participation in Friday and 'Īd Prayers

The importance of religious congregations on Friday and on the 'Īd occasions in Islam cannot be exaggerated. Keeping in view the importance of these congregational prayers, the Law-giver waived the first condition for joining in the daily prayers, that is, the prohibition to join in the day-time, though women have been exempted from the obligation of offering the Friday Prayers. (*Abū Da'ūd*). Their participation in the 'Īd Prayer is also not compulsory. But if they so desire they may join in these prayers, provided that they observe the other conditions for them for joining in the congregational prayers. Traditions show that the Holy Prophet himself used to take his wives to the religious congregations on the 'Īd occasions.

According to Umm 'Atiyyah, the Holy Prophet used to take unmarried young girls and married and menstruating women along with him to the 'Īd congregations. The menstruating women would keep away from the prayers, but would join in the invocation, (*Al-Tirmizi*). According to Ibn 'Abbās, the Holy Prophet took his daughters and wives to the 'Īd congregations. (*Ibn Mājah*).

Attending Funerals and Visiting Graves

Attending the funeral of a Muslim is a duty, though optional, and the instructions exhorting the Muslims to attend funerals are well known to the people who care. But these instructions are meant only for the males. As for women, they have been prohibited, though not strictly, from attending funerals. Traditions show that women were sometimes allowed to attend funerals, but the Law-giver did not approve of this. A tradition related by Umm 'Atiyyah in the Collection by Al-Bukhāri says : "We were prohibited, though not strictly, from accompanying funeral processions". According to *Ibn Mājah* and *Nasā'i*, once the Holy Prophet was attending a funeral when he saw a woman. Hazrat 'Umar reproved her, but the Holy Prophet said : "O 'Umar, leave her alone". It appears that the woman was a near relative

of the dead person and had accompanied the funeral under the intensity of grief. The Holy Prophet had a regard for her feelings and forbade Hazrat 'Umar to reprove her.

Similar is the injunction about visiting the graves. Women are by nature soft-hearted, and they keep the memory of the dead ones fresh in their minds for a long time. That is why the Holy Prophet did not like to suppress their feelings completely, but instructed that frequenting the graves by women was prohibited. According to a tradition related by Hazrat Abū Hūrairah in the Collection by *Al-Tirmizi*, "The Holy Prophet cursed the woman who visited the graves frequently".[1] Hazrat 'Ā'ishah went to the grave of her brother, Hazrat 'Abdur Rahmān bin Abī Bakr, and said, "By God, if I had been present at the time of your death, I would not have visited your grave today". (*Al-Tirmizi*). According to Anas bin Mālik, when the Holy Prophet saw a woman crying over a grave, he did not forbid her, but said "Fear God, and have patience". (*Al-Bukhāri*).

Now let us consider these instructions carefully. The Islamic prayer is a holy worship ; the mosque is a sacred place ; a pilgrim to the Ka'abah performs the ceremonies with the purest thoughts ; and the person attending a funeral and visiting a grave has the thought of death foremost in his mind, and is overwhelmed by grief. At all such occasions, sexual feelings are either wholly absent or suppressed by the pure feelings. But in spite of that the Law-giver did not approve that the male and the female should mix in such social and religious gatherings. Though he allowed women to go out of the houses in view of the solemnity of the occasions, purity of the purpose and their delicate feelings—sometimes even took them along with him—he imposed such restrictions of Purdah as would guard against the least probabilities of mischief. Then he ruled that except for *Hajj* it was better for women not to attend the other religious congregations.

It is obvious that the Law which has such trends cannot be expected to allow that the two sexes should freely mix in schools and

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1. Traditions with the same content have been reported by Hazrat Ibn 'Abbās and Hassān bin Thābit in the Collection by *Ibn Mājah*.

colleges, offices and factories, parks and places of entertainment, theatres and cinemas, and cafes and ballrooms as and when they please.

Participation in Battle

Now that we have seen the strictness of the laws of Purdah, let us see where and why they are relaxed.

Imagine for a while that the Muslims are engaged in war and emergency has been declared. Circumstances demand that the whole collective strength of the nation should be mustered in defence. Under such extreme conditions Islam enjoins the Muslim women also to contribute their due share to the war effort. But it keeps in view the fact that woman was created for motherhood and not for killing and shedding blood. Therefore, to equip her with the weapons of war is to distort her very nature. That is why Islam allows women to take up arms only in self-defence, but it does not favour carrying them in the battle-field and recruiting them in the forces. It employs them only to give first aid to the wounded, take water to the thirsty, cook food for the soldiers, and guard the camp in their absence. In order that they may carry out these duties efficiently, restrictions of Purdah have been considerably relaxed. In fact, they have been allowed by *Shari'ah* to wear the same sort of dress, with a little modification, as is worn by the Christian nuns now-a-days.

Traditions show that the wives of the Holy Prophet and the other Muslim women used to give first aid to the wounded and water to the thirsty at the battle-field. This practice remained in force even after the commandments of Purdah had been ordained. (*Al-Bukhārī*). According to *Al-Tirmizi*, Umm Sulaim and certain other women from among the *Anṣār* accompanied the Holy Prophet to many a battle-field. According to *Al-Bukhārī*, a woman requested the Holy Prophet to pray for her that she might accompany those people who were to go for the naval battle. He prayed, "O Allah, let her be one of them!" On the occasion of the battle of Uḥd, when the soldiers of Islam had been compelled to retreat Hazrat 'Ā'ishah and Umm Sulaim brought leather-bags full of water on their backs and took water to the fighters Hazrat Anas

says that he saw them running to and fro with their trousers tucked up ; so much so that the lower part of their shins could be seen. (*Al-Bukhāri*). Hazrat 'Umar has related this Saying of the Holy Prophet about another woman, named Umm Sulait :

> "During the battle of Uḥd, wherever I looked, to the right or to the left; I saw Umm Sulait fighting desperately to protect me".

In the same battle, Rubai', daughter of Mu'awwaz, accompanied by a party of women was busy giving first aid to the wounded, and the same women were also carrying the wounded back to Madīnah. (*Al-Bukhāri*). In the battle of Hunain, Umm Sulaim was seen moving about with a dagger in her hand. The Holy Prophet asked, "What is this for?" She replied, "If some unbeliever comes near me, I will rip open his belly". (*Ibn Mājah*).

Umm 'Atiyyah took part in seven battles and was responsible for guarding the camp, cooking food for the soldiers, and nursing the wounded and the sick. (*Ibn Mājah*). According to Hazrat Ibn 'Abbās, the women who performed such war services were awarded prizes from the booty. (*Muslim*).

This shows that the Islamic Purdah is not a custom of ignorance which cannot be relaxed under any circumstances. On the other hand, it is a custom which can be relaxed as and when required in a moment of urgency. Not only is a woman allowed to uncover the face and the hand but even if she has to uncover a part of her *satar* under necessity, there is no harm. But as soon as the necessity is over, she has to observe the normal rules of Purdah. Just as this Purdah is not a Purdah of ignorance, so the relaxation allowed in observing it is not like the license of ignorance. The Muslim woman cannot be compared with the European woman who came out of the house in view of the emergency created by war, but even after the war was over, she refused to return to her natural sphere.

Conclusion

THIS is the just and right middle course which the world so badly needs for its progress, prosperity, and moral well-being. As I have pointed out in the beginning of this book, the world has been trying in vain for thousands of years to determine the right place of woman, who constitutes half of humanity in the community life. Sometimes it swings to one extreme, sometimes to the other. Both the extremes have added to man's distress, and this is confirmed by his own experience and observation. The just and right course between the extremes which is in harmony not only with human nature and reason but also with man's worldly requirements is the one offered by Islam. But, unfortunately, certain impediments in the modern age have made it difficult for the people to comprehend the Right Path of Islam and appreciate it properly.

The biggest impediment in this regard is that the modern man has developed the disease of taking a jaundiced view of things. Especially the westernized people of the East have been attacked by a more dangerous form of this disease which I would call the "white jaundice". I must apologize to my friends and brethren for this frank remark, but I must point out the truth. Whereas no law or injunction of Islam is opposed to the established scientific facts, nay, the established scientific facts constitute Islam itself, but in order to comprehend this fact, one needs to have a colourless vision so that one may see things in their true colour. For one needs a broad outlook so that one may see all the aspects of things ; one needs an open and receptive mind so that one may take things as they are and subject one's feelings and trends to them instead of subjecting them to one's whims and caprices. The fact is that even one's knowledge and learning can be of no avail if one lacks these qualities of the head and heart. A coloured vision will see everything in its own colour ; a restricted look will see only those aspects of

things and problems which are within its particular angle of vision. Then, in spite of all this, the scientific facts which somehow enter the mind in their real shape will be influenced by the narrowness of the mind and crookedness of one's nature. These will cause the facts to become moulded according to one's urges, trends and personal whims, and if they refuse to be so moulded they may be overlooked and disregarded as facts and given no weight in the affairs of life against one's personal desires. Obviously, when a person is afflicted with such a malady, neither his learning nor his experience nor observation can afford him any guidance. For such a person it is impossible to understand any injunction of Islam in its true spirit, because Islam is the religion of nature, nay, it is nature itself. The Western world finds it difficult to understand Islam because it has developed this malady. Though all the "Knowledge"[1] it has is nothing but "Islam", yet it does not realize this, for unfortunately her own vision is coloured. Then the same malady has afflicted the modern educated class of the East in the form of "white jaundice". This also prevents these people from deducing the right inferences from the scientific facts and viewing the problems of life in an unbiased manner. And those among them who are Muslims may have faith in Islam and in its truth, and may even cherish the desire to practise it, but they are helpless, because their jaundiced sight shows everything in un-Godly colours.

The second impediment is that while considering an Islamic problem people do not consider it against the background of the whole system to which it belongs. On the contrary, they consider it in isolation, severed from its system, with the result that it appears to be senseless and gives rise to all sorts of misgivings. The same thing happened with regard to the prohibition of interest. It was considered independently of the economic system of Islam and so people could not accept its prohibition. Even the learned people felt the need of modifying this law of Islam against the very object of *Shari'ah*. The same basic error has likewise been repeated in respect of the problems of slavery, polygamy, rights of the husband

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1. That is, Knowledge of Reality, not of concepts and deductions from acts.

and wife, etc. and the problem of Purdah has been no exception. If one has in mind only a pillar instead of the whole structure of a building, one cannot help wondering why the pillar has been erected at all. One will find it devoid of any wisdom, any sense. It will never occur to one how suitably and proportionately has the engineer devised it to give support to the building, and how the building will be affected in case it is demolished. Exactly similar is the case of Purdah. When it is considered apart from the Social System in which it has been provided like a pillar in a building to fulfil a particular need, it will appear devoid of all sense and wisdom and nobody will realize why the two sexes of the human race have been segregated. Therefore, it is absolutely essential that in order to understand the wisdom of the erection of the pillar, the whole building in which it has been provided should be carefully examined.

Now the real Purdah of Islam along with the Social System for whose protection laws of Purdah have been enjoined is before the reader. The various pillars of the System in harmony with which the pillar of Purdah has been provided are also before him. He has also been acquainted with the scientific facts on which this Social System has been based. The reader may examine these closely and point out any weakness, any immoderation in the System. He may also consider where in the System a reform may possibly be effected on purely scientific grounds, apart from the trends of a particular section of the people. I assert on the basis of my insight that this System is based on the same principles of justice and equity, balance and proportion which one finds operating in the structure and order of the earth and the universe, the atom and the solar system. This system is wholly free from excess and one-sidedness which is the inevitable weakness of human works. Man cannot reform and improve it. If he tries to effect even the slightest alteration in it by use of his defective intellectual powers, he will upset its balance instead of reforming it.

I wish I possessed the means by which I could convey my voice to my brethren living in Europe and America, Russia and Japan, for they are heading for the ruin for want of a right and rational social system and are becoming instrumental in bringing about the ruin of the other nations as well. I wish I could take to

them the elixir of life, which they badly need, though they may not feel the thirst for it. But most of the Hindus, Sikhs, Christians, Zoroastrians, however, of my neighbouring country understand my language : therefore, I invite them to clear their hearts of their prejudices against Islam caused by the old political differences with the Muslims and study like a seeker after truth the Social System of Islam which I have presented more or less precisely in this book. Then they should compare it with the Western social system for which they are heading blindly. Then they should decide for the sake of their own well-being which system holds out better prospects of their real happiness and prosperity.

Now I would like to address a few words to my Muslim brethren, who also lost the Right Way long ago.

First of all, I would like to make an appeal to those modern educated Muslims who profess belief in most of the things mentioned above, but argue that Islam has allowed relaxation in its laws in accordance with the changing circumstances, and none can deny this. Therefore, they should have the freedom to avail themselves of this provision for relaxation. The conditions of the modern age, they say, press for relaxation in Purdah. For it is absolutely necessary that the Muslim women should go to schools and colleges for the sake of higher education and training so that they are enabled to understand and solve the social, economic and political problems of the country. Without the female education, they say, the Muslims are already lagging behind the other communities, and are liable to suffer even greater losses in the future. If the Muslim women do not develop the capacity of availing themselves fully of their political rights, or fail to do so on account of the restrictions of Purdah, the Muslim people will lose much of their importance politically. Then they cite instances of Turkey and Iran, the advanced nations of the Muslim world, who have relaxed Purdah in view of the changed conditions of the world, and have benefited from this "reform" considerably in a few years.[1] What is the harm, they ask, if they also follow suit?

Even if these dangers were real, they would be harmless even if

1. These nations have not relaxed Purdah, they have in fact discarded it

multiplied ten times and the law of Islam cannot be altered or relaxed to avoid any such danger. The nature of such hazards may be illustrated by an example. Suppose that a person chooses an unhealthy place for himself to live in, or is obliged to live in such a place on account of his weakness. In such a case, it is not only difficult for him to observe the rules of health there, but he cannot even help adopting the filthy habits of the filthy people of the place. Obviously, in a situation as this, there can be no question of modifying or relaxing the laws of health. If one believes in the truth of these laws, one must strive to cleanse the environments. But if, on the other hand, one does not have the courage and muscle to fight the environments, and one is completely overwhelmed by the prevailing conditions, one should remain satisfied with the filth. Why should the laws of health be changed or relaxed for one? If, however, one regards these laws as wrong and one has also become accustomed to the filth, one may make any laws to suit one's taste and convenience. The law of purity and cleanliness should not be changed after the whims of those who have an inclination towards the filth.

No doubt, the Islamic law also, like all other systems of law, allows for strictness or relaxation in accordance with circumstances, but like all other laws it also insists that in order to determine strictness or relaxation in a particular case, circumstances should be examined and viewed in accordance with the spirit of Islam itself. To examine circumstances from a different angle and then attack the provisions of the law with a view to relaxing their severity is simply and purely tampering with the law. The circumstances which are giving rise to the demand for "relaxation" are in fact being examined from an un-Islamic point of view : they would indeed warrant that the law should be strictly enforced, and not relaxed, if the same were examined from the Islamic point of view. The law may be relaxed when the ends of the law can be met in other ways, and the safeguards do not need to be tightened up. But when the ends of the law are not being met in other ways, rather they are being frustrated by the counteracting forces, and the fulfilment of these ends entirely depends on the safeguards only, then only an ignorant person can think of demanding relaxation in the law.

As we have mentioned above, the object of the Social Law of

Islam is to safeguard the institution of marriage, prevent sexual anarchy and eradicate immoderate sexual excitements. For this end, the Law-giver has devised three kinds of measures : moral purification, punitive laws and preventive measures, that is, rules regulating the covering of *satar*, etc. These are, so to speak, the three pillars of the Social System of Islam, and on their strength and stability depends the strength and stability, or otherwise, of the entire system. Now let us examine the present circumstances in our country, and see the condition of these pillars in our society.

First, let us consider our moral condition. We are living in a country 75 per cent of whose population is still non-Muslim mainly due to our own and our ancestors' negligence, which is being ruled by a non-Muslim power, and which is being stormed by a non-Muslim civilization.[1] The principles of un-Islamic morality and the ideas of un-Islamic civilization have spread like germs of plague and cholera in the atmosphere, with the result that the whole environment has become poisoned, affecting all and sundry. Obscene and indecent behaviour that made people shudder with disgust a few years back has now become so common that it is regarded as an ordinary everyday affair. Muslim children daily see indecent pictures in the newspapers, magazines and posters, and are becoming accustomed to indecency. The old, the young, the children, all go to the cinema halls to enjoy displays of nudism, indecency and sexual love. So much so that even father and son, brother and brother, mother and daughter, sit side by side and witness open scenes of kissing and caressing, mixing and playing together, without any feeling of embarrassment. Extremely dirty and exciting songs are played in every house and every shop and none is immune from their sound. Women of the higher classes, both European and native, are going about in semi-nude dresses, and people have become so accustomed to these dresses that none considers them indecent and immodest. The moral ideas of the West that are being diffused through education are disrupting the Islamic institutions. Thus, marriage is being regarded as an antiquated custom, fornication as a pastime, mixing of the sexes as commendable, divorce as the child's play, matrimonial

[1] This refers to the conditions prevalent in pre-partition India.

duties an unbearable burden, procreation as a folly, obedience to the husband as a bondage, nay, being the wife as a misfortune and being the mistress as something ideal in the world !

Now let us consider the repercussions of these ideas on our nation. Do we find any trace of the observance of the command for "restraining the eyes" in our society? Is there to be founde ven one man in a hundred thousand who refrains from enjoying the charms of the other women? Is not adultery of the eye and the tongue being openly committed? Are the Muslim women abstaining from the display of fineries and show of decoration and beauty? Are not the same sort of dresses being worn in the houses of the Muslims about which the Holy Prophet said, "Women....remain naked even after wearing clothes, allure others and are allured by others"? Do we not see our own sisters and daughters and mothers wearing such dresses as a Muslim woman can wear before none but her husband? Are not obscene tales and filthy love-romances freely related and listened to in our society? Do people feel any shame whatever in describing their own illicit sex relations before others? When things have come to such a pass, how could the foremost pillar of the purity of morals remain standing, which was the mainstay of the superstructure of the Social System of Islam? The Islamic sense of honour has become a thing of the past; so much so that the Muslim women are being kept illicitly not only by the Muslims but also by the non-Muslims. This is happening not only in British India but in the Muslim princely states as well. The Muslims see this but it does not make their blood boil. They rather feel proud of their connection with the non-Muslim chiefs and rich people.

Now let us examine the condition of the pillar of the punitive laws. The Islamic Penal Code has been rendered ineffective throughout India. The punishment for fornication and calumny is neither inflicted in the Muslim states nor in British India. Even fornication by itself is not regarded as a punishable crime in the law of the land. If a person entices away a respectable woman for the purpose of corruption, there is no law to protect her chastity. If a man has illicit relations with a woman, he cannot be punished under any law. If a woman sells herself openly, she cannot be stopped from this

by any piece of legislation. The law holds rape alone as a crime, and the legal practitioners know how difficult it is to establish rape. To entice a married woman away is also a crime, but those well-versed in the British law will testify that if a married woman willingly lives with somebody else, our law courts will find themselves helpless to deal with her.

Obviously, both these pillars have demolished. Now the whole superstructure of the Social System of Islam rests only on one pillar. Do we then intend to pull it also down? On the one hand, Purdah has the "drawbacks" which people so keenly point out; on the other hand, there are moral and social hazards in case it is discarded. Both are evils, but let us ask for the verdict of our heart to find which is the less, so that we may choose and adopt it.

Hence, if circumstances are to be the arbiter, the conditions prevailing in India demand that the law of Purdah should be strictly enforced rather than relaxed. For the two pillars supporting our Social System have already been pulled down, and now the entire system stands only on the third one. If we have to solve our social, economic and political problems as Muslims, we shall have to think hard and find out the Islamic ways of their solution. But we should not, in any way, go beyond the limits prescribed by Islam. Therefore, let us not weaken Purdah, which is a bulwark against the sex anarchy, especially of the present age. Before we ever think of relaxing Purdah, we should have mustered enough strength to pluck out those eyes that stare a Muslim woman who has to come out of her house for some genuine piece of business.